

The Gospel News

January, 2003

Volume 59, No. 1

“Ho paura id dio” – “I have fear of God.”

By Evangelist Joel Gehly

“Ho paura id dio” – “I have fear of God.” These are the words of our Brother Giovanni Marino from Frankfurt, Germany. With this sentiment expressed early in our visit, I knew that God was blessing this family and would honor our prayers for the weekend. The Marino family (originally from southern Italy) has been under great attack recently by the evil in this world. This was one of the main reasons Brother John DiBattista and I traveled to Frankfurt in early September to visit and try to uplift this family. We fasted and prayed before the trip that the Lord would go before us and show His magnificent love. We did not have to worry as God’s presence was felt and demonstrated throughout our visit.

Brother Giovanni and Sister Filomena are two humble and faithful members of the Church. They have two married daughters and four beautiful grandchildren. Currently, their oldest daughter (Lena) has become entangled in the world and has left her family. Needless to say, this has caused great heartache and stress with the entire family. When we entered our brother and sister’s

home on Saturday morning, Brother Giovanni began to tell us of these problems and during that discussion, he said those words, “Ho paura id dio.” At that moment, we felt the Spirit of God come down upon us while we sat on his little balcony.

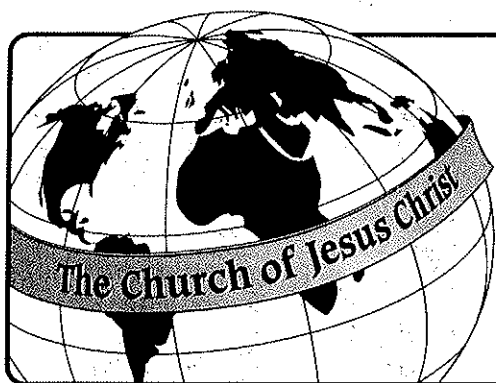
The Marino family has lived in Frankfurt, Germany for many years, but they are originally from the San Demetrio area of Italy. Brother Giovanni is an elder in the Church and he is a staunch believer in the Restored Gospel. Our brother and sister travel back to San Demetrio every year when they have time off from work and they are a great inspiration and help to the saints there. Brother Giovanni will be retiring from his work in a couple of years and they intend to return to live in San Demetrio. Brother Giovanni told us in our discussions during the weekend, “My burden is here [Frankfurt], but my heart is in The Church of Jesus Christ [San Demetrio].”

During our visit, the Lord blessed the Marino family with His love and presence. Let me relate to you a few of the blessings the Lord gave to our brother and sister. On Saturday night, the Lord gave Brother Giovanni a

very beautiful dream and he awoke encouraged and greatly blessed (the details of the dream were not given to his memory). Sunday morning, Brother Giovanni came to the hotel to pick us up for our fellowship. While he was gone, Sister Filomena was getting the apartment ready for our service. As she was alone, she heard the voice of God speak to her. He said, “Continue to do what you are doing [in serving me].” At first she was afraid, but then the voice spoke the message the second time and our sister said that the voice was a beautiful sweet voice that gave her comfort.

We enjoyed a wonderful meeting on Sunday in their apartment. The word of God was spoken and testimonies were shared. Brother Giovanni stated that since the problems happened with his children, he was having a very difficult time feeling the spirit of God and he was unable to cry. During our visit and our Sunday service, he was able to feel God’s spirit and he freely wept tears of joy and relief. At the end of our service, the Lord inspired us to read a verse of scripture found in Job, the 38th chapter. As we read that scripture, Brother Giovanni grabbed my arm and began to weep as he flipped through the pages of his Bible. There in the book of Job was a

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A message from the Seventy

August 2002 Trip to Peru

By Brother Dick Christman

The trip to Arequipa, Peru, was the first mission trip for Brother Justin Sieverson. The operation of the mission, including building rent and other vital mission needs, are given priority in the mission budget, which precludes most travel costs. Brother Justin, as well as other mission travelers, willingly purchased their own tickets and were prepared to finance their other expenses in order to help further the Gospel. Brother Justin studied Spanish and had made preparation for the trip. The preparation was evident in the seminars and classes he conducted in the Spanish language. Both the adults and children enthusiastically supported the seminars, which were taught by Brother Miguel Bicelis, Sister Pat Christman, Brother Dick Christman and Bro. Justin.

Sister Sissi Montesinos asked for her baptism. Her husband was baptized on our prior visit. Brother Jose Cardenas, a 16-year-old brother, thanked God that He prompted some anonymous donor to fund his surgery, which enabled him to lift both arms above his head in praise. He was unable to lift his arms for 14 years as a result of scar tissue from a severe burn as an infant. Others were thankful for the clothing the saints had donated.

One young couple was struggling to care for their three children. They have very little income due to the reduced tourist trade and the poor economy. However, they felt constrained to adopt two more small

children that were not being adequately cared for. The clothing, and some help from the Phoenix /Mesa Sunday School, gave them renewed determination to care for the children in spite of their hardships. Brother Gerald testified he knew it was God's will because he had a dream in which he had a large house and had many children to care for. He and Sister Nancy do not have a house at this time but are living with their parents.

The Lord is directing us to revisit a mountainous area that has very little in everyday conveniences but the people are receptive to the Gospel. Pray that God will make a way. Your prayers and support make it possible.

Special Service at San Carlos, Arizona Reservation

A very special meeting was held in the Southwest Region Conference on Sunday, March 10, 2002, at the San Carlos Mission on the Apache Reservation. The service was special as it included a transition of missionaries in charge from Evangelist Dan Picciuto to his son, Brother David Picciuto.

Evangelist John Griffith, President of the Quorum of 70 Evangelists, opened the meeting with words of encouragement to all and gave recognition of the missionary efforts in San Carlos. Brother David Picciuto then gave a brief history of the Mission.

Brother Dan and Sister Dolores first came to Arizona as a very young family in August of 1960. The Church was built in August 1961 and they moved to the reservation later that year. Brother Dan and Sister Dolores remained on the San Carlos Reservation until October 1971. They returned in October 1989. Joining them were David and Laurie and their family, as well as their daughter Tina and her family, and Grandma Nellie Hoffman. A new Sanctuary was built in 1996 and they have held many successful Vacation Bible Schools with more than 100 children from the Reservation in attendance. Brother Dan and Sister Dolores have committed their lives to service on the San Carlos Reservation for a total of 23 years.

A commemorative plaque was presented to Brother Dan and Sister Dolores for their many years of faithful service at the mission. Prayer was offered on behalf of both Brother David and Sister Laurie and their family, and Brother Dan and Sister Dolores. Although Brother Dan and Sister Dolores will move to Gold Canyon, which is about 75 miles from San Carlos, they will continue to support the mission and encourage the Church to remember our Divine Commission toward God's chosen people.

What is a Missionary?

By Sister Donna Eskut

So often, we hear the term "missionary" used throughout the Church, but what is a missionary? The dictionary defines a missionary as one sent to do religious or charitable work in a territory or foreign country. We have all read reports about missionaries working in Europe, Africa, Asia, South America, and on Indian reservations in the US. Matthew 28:18 says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost." These are the reports and guidelines, but there is

so much more to a missionary.

I have had the rare opportunity to live overseas. My family and I have spent two years in South Korea, and we are now living in Lima, Peru. During this time, I have been able to witness missionaries in the field. What they actually do is far more than words could ever describe. Two brothers visited with a young sister from Japan in my South Korean home. We had meetings together, but the real missionary work came from the blessings they brought. For my young children, some of this came through bubble gum tape (a rare item in Korea!), a frozen turkey, and a packet of Sunday School lessons that they brought with them. For me, the blessings came when I saw the pure love they brought into my home. They brought guidance; it was the type that only came through thoughtful fasting and prayer. They brought songs, though neither are known for their wonderful voices. These brothers were ready and willing to do what needed done for the young Japanese sister and me. God was using them.

This past year, I was able to see missionaries in action once again on a different continent. I visited the mission in Arequipa, Peru. Once again, I felt the incredible and pure love of God that is more than words can describe. When the children smile, your heart melts. When the people give their thanks, your own humility shines because you know that none of these blessings are possible to witness without the Lord. The missionaries who come here regularly do not know much Spanish, and yet God is using them in this South American country to spread the news that Jesus is the Savior and there is a better way in life – through The Church of Jesus Christ. They often bring an interpreter with them, but even without language the work is accomplished because the love is so intense.

Living in both Asia and South America, I have learned a lot about the cultures. Often, the missionaries that are out in the field do not have this opportunity. They are in a foreign land without the benefit of the native language, cultural expectations, or

simple knowledge of how to get around. However, they have something far more powerful – the pure and complete love of God. I cannot explain in words the intensity of this love when you are out in the missionary field. It goes beyond the name of the brothers or sisters that are working there; these missionaries are simply vehicles used by God to do His work.

True missionaries are the saints who give of themselves in God's name. It is not their work; it is God's work. Missionaries bring the song *Stand Up for the Restoration* alive. They don't expect anything from the people they work with. They are doing work to tell people about The Church of Jesus Christ.

In foreign lands, the intensity of missionary work is strong, but if you really look into your heart, we each have that same spirit from God. Each of us can set an example and spread God's word. And each of us can be a true missionary. It's all a matter of opening your heart.

Great Lakes Region Evangelists visit Plumbrook, Michigan

On Saturday Evening September 14, 2002 Brothers Lou Vitto, Chairman of the Region Evangelists, Leonard A. Lovalvo and Michael LaSalla visited the Plumbrook, Michigan Branch for the first of two spiritual meetings. Brother Paul Whitton, Presiding Elder welcomed the Evangelists and visitors to this service. Brother Lou Vitto offered a very inspiring prayer asking that God would bless the branch and strengthen it spiritually. We sang a number of songs and opened with the hymn *There is Not Anything That Jesus Cannot Do*.

To bring our attention to the opening hymn that *There Is Not Anything Jesus Cannot Do*, Brother Leonard reminded us of his terrible auto accident. The first man to

approach the car told Brother Leonard that he must be a spiritual man to have survived this horrible accident. As he came to, the thoughts that went through his mind were how he had not done enough for the Lord. He cried to Jesus to have mercy and help him to recover from the critical injuries received. Today Brother Leonard is very grateful to God for saving his life. He continues to believe that he cannot do enough to repay the Lord for His goodness.

He continued reading from Acts 8:26 & 30 where Phillip, a great man of God, ran to the Eunuch as he sat in a chariot and asked if he understood what he was reading? The Eunuch said, "How can I if there is no one to guide me?" Phillip then discussed the scriptures with the Eunuch. Brother Leonard said it illustrates that we can read the scripture and not understand without God's guidance. He then went to Isaiah 53:1-12 where the prophet describes the sufferings of Christ, stressing that Jesus Christ gave His life for us and promised us salvation. As Brother Leonard closed, he emphasized that *There is Not Anything That Jesus Cannot Do*.

We reviewed the dates of baptism of each one present and sang *Precious Memories*. Brother Mike LaSalla continued saying, "Blessed be the Name, how Christ prepared the way for you and me. We are rich in His name. How blessed it is to be a child of the King. Praise God today for by His mercy we are saved."

Our Brothers reminded us of conditions in the world today and how much more we need the Lord. God has given us the best and when we pray the spirit of the Lord touches us and answers us. The best miracle is a spiritual miracle. Try not to complain in life, as what Christ went through is much worse than any of us have or will encounter. Let us praise God and stay close and you will see the many miracles the Lord can perform. We must stay together and serve the Lord together in unity. Pray unceasingly and watch what

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Missionary
Benevolent
Association

What Is the *Desire* of Your Heart?

By Sister Karen Progar

We know the GMBA, as an auxiliary of The Church of Jesus Christ, is dedicated to supporting the Church's missionary work. A number of years ago, most of that support was given as financial aid. Financial assistance was part of the package at our November 9th Conference held at the World Conference Center in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. \$5,000.00 was presented to the Missionary Operating Committee and the organization pushed towards its goal of \$50,000.00 to assist in the printing of Books of Mormon in foreign languages.

A crucial growth aspect of the GMBA lies in the physical support provided by programs such as Youth in Action, which has four planned trips for 2003. Young people will be assisting with the works in the Inner City of Detroit; Lorain, Ohio; Hollywood, Florida and Dominica. In addition, two young people are being chosen for an extended tour in Fort Worth, Texas that will last the entire summer. It is very exciting to see the programs of the GMBA take such bold and progressive steps.

We were pleased to hear about the missionary efforts of the Church. At the beginning of our afternoon session, Brother Art and Sister Martha Gehly were afforded the opportunity to tell the conference about their recent trip to the Philippines. We enjoyed hearing about the continued growth in that area of the world and how the Lord had blessed their trip with many baptisms and ordinations. The young people were also encouraged to take on pen pals from the Philippines.

I came away from the conference with an unforgettable theme in

my mind. The theme presented by Brother David Catalano, in our Saturday evening meeting was *desire*. He chose to rehearse the story of Elijah, the mentor and great man of God, and Elisha, who sought a double portion of the Spirit of God, which Elijah possessed. Elisha refused to stay behind as Elijah went about doing the things the Lord had for him to do. Brother David asked us, "Do we tell Jesus, no matter where He goes, we will follow?" That is exactly what we must do in order to receive the spirit we *desire*. He reminded us as it states in Helaman 3:34, "Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God." These were good words of counsel for all of us, reminding us of the need to pray for the direction in our lives and particularly in regard to a work we can do within the Church.

This yielding is seeking the *desire* of your heart, while being in the will of God. Brother Chuck Maddox brought home this point when he said that if we do what God tells us, the results would be there. Each of us felt renewed with the thought that the Lord wants to grant the *desires* of our hearts, particularly if those *desires* include spreading the Gospel to the children of men.

Sunday's meeting was opened by Evangelist Paul Ciotti, who had just returned from Guatemala. Brother Paul felt directed to speak on God's plan in our life. He used God's plan in Esther and Mordecai's lives as an example, warning us that if we don't yield to what the Lord has for us to do, then He will find someone else to do it. Brother Paul asked, "How will you know what His plan is for you if you don't seek him out?" It all goes back to *desire*. He also asked if we are preparing ourselves to be vessels for God? He concluded by telling us that plans are laid out in the word of God and reminded us that we must accept

that we are in God's plan and move forward. Brother Paul confirmed that Esther accepted God's plan for her life. She said in Esther 4:16, "...and if I perish, I perish." She was not concerned for her own life, but determined, having a *desire* to follow God's plan. Because of her lack of fear and determination, all the Jews were spared.

Fittingly, the congregation sang, *Speak My Lord*, after which Brother Ken Staley shared many wonderful experiences had in the missionary work of the Church. Our concluding speaker was Apostle Paul Palmieri who stated that he feels that God is moving His hand and that the Church will move throughout the world. We all have a responsibility to do this work and his prayer is that together we will be active in the work of the Lord.

GMBA President, Brother Paul Palmieri ended our conference by emphasizing that our focus is to bring sinners to Christ and he challenged everyone to find that perfect will of God. Begin praying that God will bless your good *desire* to do a work for him. Be persistent like Elisha and God will surely grant it.

Make it your *desire* to attend our next conference on May 17, 2003 at the Towne and Country Hotel in San Diego, California. This is the first time that a GMBA Conference will be held in the Pacific Coast and we look forward to a good representation of membership from throughout the country.

Happiness
depends on
happenings.

Joy depends on
Jesus!



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles. And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel. And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you" (3rd Nephi 20:20-22).

These are some of the words of Jesus when he appeared to the people upon this land shortly after His crucifixion. He was prophesying about the last days (our day). He was telling them that someday, the Gentiles would occupy this land of America, but if they did not keep His commandments, they would be destroyed. The sword of justice represents God's wrath upon evil. It is true that God is a God of mercy, but the Word teaches us that mercy cannot rob justice. A person, who does not admit their faults and repent of their sins, will not find mercy and forgiveness from God. Jesus goes on to say that He will establish the House of Israel upon this land after those who are wicked are destroyed. Jacob, the father of all the House of Israel was promised by God that his seed would never be destroyed, and that although they would be scattered and driven throughout time, in the last days, they would be gathered together again, as a righteous people. A "New Jerusalem" will be established upon the land of America. Jerusalem was always the city of God, but in the last days, this land of America will become the "New Jerusalem" where men and women everywhere will see the "powers of heaven," and even Jesus Himself, will be in the midst of us! Certainly, those of the House of Israel who repent will be there, as well as any Gentiles who repent. We already know that the Jews and the Native Americans are two of the tribes of the House of Israel, but the other ten tribes will be known to us at that day.

What amazing insight we have about the future! There are so many beliefs and opinions in the world regarding the future, but we have been allowed to know the truth! People today say, "things are getting so bad, we don't even want to bring children into the world!" Others are consumed with fears and phobias. Fortunately, we know that "mercy cannot rob justice," and things will NOT continue on as they are. It is the perfect time to bring children into the world, as they will witness one of the most incredible events in history! Imagine living in the New Jerusalem, and witnessing the powers of heaven! Imagine actually seeing Jesus, who will be in our midst! Imagine no wickedness or sin upon this land! Imagine there just being one Church – The Church of Jesus Christ! The Bible teaches us that we will work for ourselves, gathering food, building our homes, and enjoying the fruit of our labors for a "LONG" time! The Bible also tells us that this land will become the mountain of the Lord's house, and all nations will flow to it. Imagine people coming by the thousands to be a part of this incredible city! Just imagine living in the PEACEFUL REIGN!

As we enter into the year 2003, some might feel like we are living on "borrowed time." How much longer will it take for this Peaceful Reign, or "Zion" to be established? *"The better part of a lifetime, in defense of a dream..."* Surely that day WILL come. Remember that whenever God makes us wait for something to happen, or for a prayer to be answered, He is testing our faith. We must not fail the test! It is time for us to look ahead with renewed vigor and confidence to that day that awaits us. Let us not become like the people at the time of Noah who doubted and mocked the prophecy, and then were all drowned in an awful flood. Let us stand for the truth like never before. Let us be the ones who do NOT bear the wrath of God when His sword of justice is unleashed, but let us be the ones who are victorious when this new day dawns for the people of God!

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork

The Power of Praise in Song

Dear Girls and Boys,

Many times grown-ups forget about the hard times they had as children. They forget about feeling rejected or left out by other kids or being afraid of a teacher or someone in the neighborhood. People think childhood is easy when really, it is a time of life with heavy things to learn. And the way we learn how to handle things when we are young can last a lifetime.

So, how do you handle your worries and often, the worries of friends or family? What can you do to be strong enough inside to help yourself and others? It's simple, really. It's by using your mind and heart to reach out to Jesus.

When you're walking to school or laying in bed late at night, you can have a heart to heart talk with Jesus. He's listening. Instead of just thinking worried thoughts, tell Him. Then sing a song to take away your fears.

In Acts 16:22-31, the Apostle Paul and Silas were grabbed by an angry mob of people. They were beaten and thrown into prison with their feet locked between two boards.

No one knew what the next day would bring. Would they be whipped again while strangers screamed and shoved them.

Hours passed. At midnight, Paul and Silas began to sing praises unto



God. The other prisoners heard them. And suddenly, there was a great earthquake. The entire foundation of the prison was shaken. All the doors were opened and the boards trapping the prisoners' feet were made loose.

God had heard these men who sat, hurt in the dark, and sang beautiful songs of praise. He opened the doors for them. The prison could not hold them. He can do the same for us.

When our hearts are imprisoned, upset, afraid or ashamed, God can free us. Follow Paul and Silas' example. Pray, speak the truth and trust in God. Keep trusting in Him even if it's still dark. Raise a joyful song to Him. It works!

Do this over the next terrible or not so terrible problem you hear about. Every time you feel scared or full of worry and dread, pray. Call on God. Tell Him. Don't gossip about your friend—say a prayer in Jesus' name. Then sing a song that gives you hope.

Do you have favorite songs from our hymn books or the *Songs of Zion*? When I'm driving the car in a dreadful thunderstorm, I sing *No, Never Alone* or *My God! Thou See'st Me*. When I feel heartsick about others, I sing *I Saw the Wicked Flourish Like a Green Bay Tree*, or *Good Morning God*.

Turn off your stereo, your CD's and the radio. Turn on the real power—a song of trust and praise to God. It will make you braver, stronger and better. Let a hymn of praise work for you over and over and over.

With care, and may *God Be With You Till We Meet Again*.

Love,
Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

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Happy New
Year

To All Our Readers



Forest Hills, Holiday, Florida News

By Sister Lorraine Rose

THE WONDERS OF HIS LOVE...

...And Jesus said, "Come to the waters, stand by my side; I know you are thirsty, you won't be denied. I felt every tear-drop, when in darkness you cried, and I strove to remind you, that **FOR THOSE TEARS I DIED.**" The Lord calls and we answer and there are times we struggle to answer right away, but the Lord never gives up on us.

We, at the Forest Hills Branch, have received such an abundance of His love, spirit and blessings this day that I wanted to share it with all the saints.

The spirit of God started burning several months ago. Sunshine met the Church through Brother Dan Risola, her fiancé. She enjoyed the fellowship very much, but had been struggling for a while with her desire to be part of this Gospel. Many blessings were received through the love of God and she was always mindful of her desire. Brother Dan also felt the spirit had touched her and that she was struggling.

Sunday evening, July 28, 2002, we had a Solid Foundation (formerly New Members) class. The discussion was from the Book of Mormon, Nephi's dream. Sister Pearl had asked why some of Lehi's children (Laman and Lemuel) did not follow God like Nephi and Sam. The message was brought out that it is an individual choice. We discussed reasons why we would serve the Lord and why we wouldn't. A circle was formed and Brother Scott Griffith felt to close in prayer. Afterwards, Sunshine was very touched and we could see she was struggling. Brother Sam Risola laid hands on her asking God to "break

those chains that were binding her." The gift of tongues was spoken with the interpretation, "My love was proven to you through the cross." Immediately after that Sunshine shouted, "I WANT TO BE BAPTIZED!" Praise God!

Sunday morning, August 4, 2002, we met at the water's edge to witness another soul surrendering to the Lord. Sister Sunshine was baptized by Brother Scott Griffith. What a blessing this was, but the Lord had much more for us this day.

After a request of hymns sung by Brother Phil and Sister Linda Benyola,



Sister Sunshine after being baptized by Brother Scott Griffith.

Brother Jim Speck read John 14:25-26 pertaining to the Holy Ghost. "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

The elders then gathered around Sister Sunshine and she was confirmed by Brother John Griffith. After Brother Dan gave his testimony, he, Brother Scott, Brother Bryan and Brother John Griffith then sang, *There is a River*. Sister Sunshine then gave her testimony to the congregation. While Sister Sunshine was testifying, a few experiences took place:

Sister Pearl Zinzi saw Sister Sunshine, her hair and clothing arrayed

all in white.

Sister Linda Benyola saw a brilliant figure of a man, kneeling at the sacrament table, with his head bowed down. She also saw two figures, brilliant in white, walking back and forth on the ministry.

The words, "I call and I receive" came to Brother John Griffith. What a confirmation of His great Love for us and His happiness when we obey.

After Sister Debbie Gonzalez sang *If That Isn't Love*, Brother Phil Benyola read John 14:28 concerning the "Peace" the Lord gives us.

God is truly a living God, giving so much to those that love and serve Him. I hope you felt a little bit of this spirit that we experienced. May God bless you.

Atlanta, Georgia

By Brother Mark Kovacic

Chance Meeting?

A few Saturdays ago, my brother-in-law, Brother Jerry Lee Warden, and I were in the Marietta Public Library (Marietta is northwest of Atlanta). I was picking out some new books on tape to be listened to in the car during my commutes to work. I overheard a man on the other side of the shelves. I could not see his face, but his voice and what he was saying told me he was an American Indian.

I thought what an opportunity! Then, I hesitated. I started rationalizing, "It's a public place, I should be careful," etc. But as I started for the stairs, I stopped and prayed in my heart, asking the Lord for assistance.

The man at that point also started up the steps and I asked him what nation he was from. He responded that he was a Lakota Sioux. I asked him what brought him so far from home. He said he was there to start an American Indian Association. Although he was leaving, I struck up a conversation with him and gave him one of my church cards and told him to call me if he needed any help.

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Atlanta, Georgia

Continued from Page 7

At General Church conference I was telling Brother Richard Scaglione about this encounter and he quickly pointed out that he and Sister Lucetta had worked among the same people during the three years they lived in Eagle Butte, South Dakota in the early 1960's. Brother and Sister Scaglione were in Atlanta just two months ago showing slides about the Book of Mormon and sharing their experiences from their stay in South Dakota.

Chance meeting? I don't think so. So, please pray with me that this American Indian will call and that The Church of Jesus Christ may have an opportunity to work with the American Indians in the Atlanta area.

Fort Worth, Texas

By Brother David Casillas

In September, 2002, in the Ft. Worth Texas branch, Brother Joel Monsivias was chosen by God to be ordained a minister by Brother Ike Smith. The service began like most others with a comforting introduction from the minister. There was also an invigorating excitement produced by intense anticipation and curiosity as to what God had in store for the congregation that special Sunday morning. The ordination service proved to be an emotional blessing from start to finish.

Visitors for the occasion included Brother Tom Liberto, Sister Bonnie Smith, and several others, including some from Laredo, Texas. Quoting Brother Ike Smith "Brother Joel has been called by God and God doesn't make mistakes." Brother Joel's feet were washed by Brother Pete Giannetti. Then, filled with tears of indescribable joy that only God can bring you, Brother Joel gave a beautiful testimony which was a blessing to hear. One can only imagine what glorious things God has in store for Brother Joel's future, and for all of our futures in The Church of Jesus Christ. Praise God!

A Day Filled with Blessings at Vanderbilt, PA

By Sister Peggy Stroko

The day, September 29, 2002 was started at 9:00 am. as we gathered at the shore of the Yougheney River at Dawson, Pennsylvania. Another of God's children surrendered their all to Him. The winds were calm as Brother Lawrence King took Margaret Ilene Frankenberg into the waters of baptism.

We met back at the branch, *To the Work* was sung as Margaret made her way forward to sit in front of the congregation. Brother Richard Lowther was touched by the Spirit as he laid hands upon her head. He prayed asking God to bestow upon her the gifts of The Church of Jesus Christ and that the fruits of the Spirit would manifest throughout her life. He then pronounced the gift of the Holy Ghost upon her.

Sister Margaret and daughter-in-law Sister Connie Frankenberg sang a duet, *How Great Thou Art*, after we all greeted our new sister in Christ.

Brother Chester Nolfi spoke saying, "The angels are rejoicing today that another soul has come to the Lord." He made reference to St. John 14:26, "*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" Brother Chester continued by saying, "We need that Spirit of the Holy Ghost."

Brother Richard Lowther followed, saying, "Use that gift of the Holy Ghost wisely and let it work for you."

Brother Lawrence King then spoke relating the experience he had at the water's edge this morning. "It was a tremendous experience for me this morning because as I put Maggie down into the water and I looked down and her body seemed to be so level. I couldn't believe it honestly, truly! She was buried with Christ. I have never experienced that before. I looked down and it looked as though her body

was just level there in the water and when she came up she was a new creature in Christ Jesus!" He continued by saying, "We can't expect Christ to conform to us, we must conform to Christ."

Our service was continued by the ordinance of Feet Washing where the blessings continued to be prevalent.

The meeting was ended in prayer as we formed a circle of love holding hands.

There has been much sorrow in our branch because of the recent passing of Aaron Darr, Sister Goldie Hixon, and Sister Susanna King. Today we are told of two members of the Church transferring to our branch—Brother James and Sister Mechelle Haugh, with their daughters Nia and Taryn. Now we have another new sister in Christ, Margaret I. Frankenberg.

May God bless our new sister and our new members!

God is healing our Branch! He continues to bless us all!

Blessing in New Brunswick, NJ

On Sunday, October 5th, 2002, we were blessed with the Spirit of God in our presence. We were few in number that day in the New Brunswick, New Jersey branch but none the less, we know the Lord has said that where two or three are gathered together in His name, He would be in their midst.

In Sunday School, Brother James Howard continued with the previous week's lesson on 2nd Nephi, Chapter 9, expounding on why Christ died and if He had not died, what hope would there have been for us? He also discussed having wisdom, understanding and discernment. We were also blessed to have our Sister Terry Bravo from the Edison, New Jersey Branch visiting us. She was a provided "ram in the bush" setting the sacrament table.

Brother Sam Sgro opened the morning meeting in prayer and the Spirit of God was surely in his offer-

ing. Following was Brother James Howard, who spoke on Proverbs, Chapter 4, versus 5 thru 8. He spoke on wisdom being the principal thing and the importance of possessing wisdom, knowledge, understanding and discernment. He also spoke on obedience and how obedience was better than sacrifice. He implored us to stay with the Church and "forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee."

Brother Sam Sgro, who read from Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12, verses 9 thru 11 and 13 thru 14, concerning knowledge and the whole duty of man, followed him. Next, Brother Wilbert McNeil spoke on our promise we made at the water's edge, love and obedience. Brother Ricky Calabro followed speaking in 1st Corinthians, Chapter 2, verse 12, concerning the discerning spirit of God. He also spoke about the foolishness of God being wiser than men. We were blest to hear from all the Elders that Sunday.

During testimony, Sister Terry Bravo related how she had attended Sunday School in Edison that morning and how the young children's lesson was on Solomon's wisdom. What a wonderful blessing how the Lord confirmed the message that was brought forth to us from the youngest to the oldest!

Sister Maria Canseco Espinoza, one of our newly baptized sisters, testified of a vision she had upon coming to Church. She saw a white dove flying in front of the church and during the preaching she saw a bright light over the priesthood and did not understand what it meant.

Brother Ricky explained the dove as being representative of God's spirit and the bright light also being the Spirit of God, as we can truly testify He was in our presence.

We enjoyed a beautiful meeting as we felt God's spirit, goodness, grace and love in the teaching, preaching, singing, testimonies and partaking of communion. God is so good to us. It was asked of Him to come into our midst and He did not disappoint us. As our Brother Wilbert often says (using his mother's words), "Who wouldn't serve a God like this!" Amen!

92-Year-Old Baptized

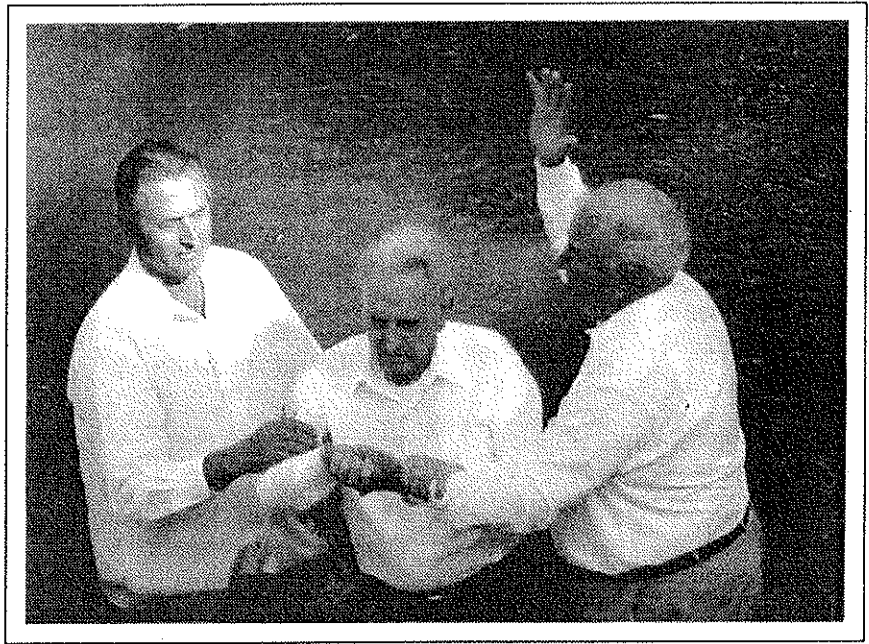
October 13, 2002 began with the saints gathering at the Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, it was decided not to break the congregation into separate classes. Instead, we would remain in one group, unified, singing praises to our God in anticipation of another soul coming to Christ. Elmer Bittinger, at the age of 92 was going to the waters of rejuvenation. Several of his family members including his brother, Apostle Joseph Bittinger, gathered to support him. The songs of redemption filled the air. Our jubilation was great!

Soon the caravan began like a

great train heading to the waters. Evangelist Jim Moore and Brother Bob Buffington escorted Elmer into the water. As Brother Bob lifted his hands to the heavens, a glorious beam of light broke through the clouds, spotlighting the three men, acknowledging heaven's delight.

The same spirit prevailed as Brother Tom Stroko, his grandnephew, laid hands upon our new brother in prayer to receive the Holy Ghost.

While the congregation prepared to greet our newest member, Apostle Joseph Bittinger took his brother's hands. He hugged him and told him "you've always been a good man, a hard worker, now you will have joy!" What a blessed event to witness!



Brother Bob Buffington, assisted by Brother Jim Moore, baptizing Brother Elmer Bittinger.

Tampa, Florida

By Brother Peter Benyola

Perhaps Brother Dee Eutsey missed Sunday school for a reason this morning.

For the past several months, in Sunday school, as a group, we have been reading Brother V. James Lovalvo's book, *A Dissertation on the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of*

Jesus Christ. Today, we studied Article 23, concerning the Peaceful Reign and how man will be in the mortal form when He takes His children to Zion. We discussed many topics including the humbling of the nation and how September 11 and its long-lasting repercussions may have played a part in ushering in the Peaceful Reign. We also discussed other

(Continued on Page 10)

Tampa, Florida

Continued from Page 9

requisites, which must be fulfilled before Zion, such as the coming about of the Choice Seer. Although we barely scratched the surface of Article 23, we established the importance of retaining righteousness in our daily lives so we will always be prepared for the coming of the Lord. Brother George Benyola Jr., who was also visiting, asked the question in Sunday school, "Where is Zion to be located? I have been told probably North or South America."

Brother Dee, Brother Dewayne, and Sister Coco Eutsey, who visited

the branch, had trouble finding the building, but arrived in time for the meeting. In Brother Dee's sermon, he began by noting that there is a time and a place for everything. This dove-tailed astonishingly with a key point in the passage as well as in our lesson, "In the timetable of the Lord, there is a time and a place for everything." Another confirmation that the Spirit of the Lord was in our midst was when Brother Dee proclaimed that the gathering in Zion is to take place somewhere in the Americas.

Brother Dee, being absent from our Sunday school service, had absolutely no knowledge of what had been discussed before they arrived. How-

ever, he had directly answered Brother George's question and his sermon overall connected harmoniously with the focus of our discussion. Once again, the Lord blessed us with the prevalent gift of a recently read piece of scripture or thought splicing with a sermon. Such a remarkable occurrence cannot be dismissed as a coincidence.

I taught Sunday school for the first time today. After Brother Dee's words converging with our lesson, I truly feel that the Lord was with me. Small congregations like ours in the Tampa Branch really appreciate visitors and we are always very grateful for special blessings like this.

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Maximillian (2). Brother Giovanni's natural Brother, Osvaldo, is also in Frankfurt and has cancer. Please pray for him.

Message from the Seventy

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can happen.

Closing comments were presented by Brother Lou Vitto, stressing the importance of baptism and not fleeing from the spirit. "We must put the Lord first and all things will be added to you (Matthew 6:33). Do you feel the same as the day of baptism? Is it your desire to see all of your family in the Church? What will it take? Where are you with God tonight? We must get out of the attitude of our will and into His. *'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me'* (Philippians 4:13). Build your strength on Christ and NOT upon man. We must get serious with God and not play church. Go out one by one with a desire to bring one soul to Christ. Reserve a seat for the Lord tomorrow, here and for every branch and mission."

The evening service was closed by singing *Remind Me Dear Lord*. Brother Richard Loffredo offered prayer.

Ho Paura Id Dio

Continued from Page 1

scrap of paper that had the same verse of scripture written down. Once he was composed, Brother Giovanni told us that the day that his daughter first left her home and family, God had given him this same scripture. He was even more confident that God was with him and his family through this revelation. We all wept and rejoiced together with him.

Please continue to remember this brother and sister in your prayers. Their family also needs God's touch and we ask your prayers for them. The family includes: Lena (daughter) and Antonio (son-in-law); children - Giaccamo (13) and Julia (6). Marina (daughter) and Mimmo (son-in-law); children - Valentino (11) and

Notice

The autobiography, *I Can Hear My Savior Calling*, by Apostle V. James Lovalvo is now available at the Print House for \$15.00.

Also available again after being out of print is *Scriptural References on the Establishment, Apostasy, and Restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ*.

Please remember to send in any address changes to the Print House.

Sunday morning, September 15, he Evangelistic services were continued with Brothers Lou Vitto, Mike LaSalla, Tom Everett and Frank Vitto present. Our Presiding Elder introduced our brothers and visitors and turned the service over to the Evangelists. *What A Savior* was sung and prayer was offered by Brother Mike LaSalla.

As Brother Tom Everett opened the service he brought our attention to Revelations and reference to the seven churches and that they will not be gathered until they learn of our Redeemer.

He read from Matthew 24:36-42 regarding Noah and the Ark and not knowing when the Lord shall come. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and given in marriage until the day Noah entered the ark. They knew not that the flood would come because they did not believe Noah and made fun of him as he built the ark." "Noah was given the instructions on how to build the ark and the specific dimensions. It took 120 years and during this time Noah was telling the people for many years that it would rain. If they did not repent, they would be destroyed. Many people today are like those of old and do not believe in God and will suffer the same destruction." Brother Tom asked if we were on board the ship? At this time the words from the hymn *Set Her Free* were read. He again asked if we were sealed on the ship with the Lord? "September 11 was just the beginning and if we are running, we must stop and walk with Him. You never know if you have tomorrow, if you are not on board, you are not sealed. We must repent and be sealed on the ship. Christ cannot help them that do not repent. Again are you on board the ship? Pray and do not jump ship. Fear not the God who guides the ship's helm. If you are on the Lord's ship, no matter what comes you will be saved."

Sister Karen Romanski and Brother Lou Vitto sang *Sheltered in the Arms of God*. Brother Frank Vitto followed stating that God has a purpose for us. "Pharaoh asked Jacob what has been your life and Jacob replied that he had few sins." Brother

Frank asked, "What brought joy and happiness to us while attending church and what caused the angels to sing? Baptism. We were asked if all our sins were left at the water shore or did we keep some with us? Direction in our life is important and without God we do not have guidance. Jesus was baptized as an example and said you must repent and be baptized in order to enter the kingdom of Heaven. The angels rejoice when one soul repents. Do you want to have the Lord close the door on you? Then you will not have the opportunity to repent. Our time is quickly passing by and we need to get up and work quickly. We must walk and talk with Jesus and remember America must repent. We must be aware of where we have our thoughts. We must get close to God in order to move forward."

Sacrament was administered and several were anointed. Brother Mike LaSalla asked if we enjoyed today's service? "Who would want more blessings manifested upon them? Recommend more Fasting and Prayer, little or no Television and anything that distracts us from the spirit of the Lord. If you are not on the boat, you must get back on the ship. We should visit with one another, because we need each other."

Brother Lou Vitto concluded by saying, "The revival must begin within each of us." He asked that we pray for the Priesthood of the Church that they may spread the word and be in God's plan. "We must rid ourselves of distractions so God can use us to fulfill His work." Brother Lou read a story as follows:

WAS IT CHANCE?

A young man who had been raised as an atheist was training to be an Olympic diver. The only religious influence in his life came from his outspoken Christian friend.

The young diver never really paid much attention to his friend's sermons, but he heard them often.

One night the diver went to the indoor pool at the college he attended. The lights were off, but as the pool had big skylights and the moon was bright,

there was plenty of light to practice by. The young man climbed up to the highest diving board and as he turned his back to the pool on the edge of the board and extended his arms out, he saw his shadow on the wall. The shadow of his body, was in the shape of a cross. Instead of diving, he knelt down and asked God to come into his life.

As the young man stood, a maintenance man walked in and turned the lights on. The pool had been drained for repairs.

A wonderful service was closed as the congregation joined hands in a circle around the auditorium while singing *When The Roll is Called Up Yonder*. Brother Perry Vitto then offered closing prayer.

* WEDDINGS *

Brother Gerald Morle and Sister Linda Ali were united in holy matrimony in Greensburg, Pennsylvania on September 21, 2002.

Thomas Barrett and Gina Canova were united in holy matrimony in Glassport, Pennsylvania on October 5, 2002.

Brother Jim Bork and Sister Jan Steinrock were united in holy matrimony in Detroit, Branch #2 on June 28, 2002.

Kevin Lee Kendall and Lori Ann Hodgetts were united in holy matrimony in Roscoe, Pennsylvania on September 28, 2002.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sister Judith D'Appollonio was baptized on October 27, 2002 at the Glassport, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother David Nolfi and confirmed by Brother Ed Donkin.

Children Blessed

Danielle Renee Benyola, daughter of Paul Eric and Dawn Benyola, was blessed on October 27, 2002 at the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch.

Isabella Marie Heathman, daughter of Zachary and Sister Colleen Heathman, was blessed on April 14, 2002 at the Plumbrook, Michigan Branch.

Isaac Ryan Abbott, son of Scott Ryan Abbot and Jessica Ryan Russo, was blessed on October 27, 2002 in the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch.

OBITUARIES

ROSE STRANSKY

Sister Rose Stransky of the Atlanta, Georgia Mission passed on to her reward on Monday, October 28, 2002. Sister Rose was preceded in death by her husband just one year ago.

VELIA NOLFI DICENZO

Sister Velia Nolfi DiCenzo of the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch passed onto her reward on September 11, 2002. She was preceded in death by her parents, Dominic and Anna (Incorvati) Nolfi; husband, Panfilo DiCenzo; sister Vienna Carrabbia and brother Candido Nolfi. She is survived by her daughter Nina and son Panfilo DiCenzo; daughter-in-law Christina and son-in-law Pat DiCenzo; and grandson Panfilo A. DiCenzo.

Address Change

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

BELZONER BROWN

Brother Belzoner Brown of the Warren, Ohio Branch passed onto his reward on August 30, 2002. He is survived by his wife, Sister Alma Brown; daughters, Karen, Alberta Rucker, Cheryl Nnandi, Sandy Brown-Dramus and Patricia; sons Leroy South, Belzonja Jr., Charles and Leon; three brothers, L.D. Brinner, Melvin Brinner and Joe Lee Brinner; sister, Mattie Lee Brinner; 17 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

NORMA ROSELING

Sister Norma Roseling of the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch passed onto her reward on September 22, 2002. She had no family but is survived by her friends including Sister Candy Roth.

KELSEY MARIE LUBIENSKI

Kelsey Marie Lubienski passed onto her reward on September 20, 2002. She is preceded in death by her grandmother Donna Koebe and uncle Bobbie Lubienski, Jr. She is survived by her parents, Daniel and Becky Jo (Whitton) Lubienski; brother, Taylor Richard Lubienski; grandparents Robert and Diane Lubienski and Brother Paul and Sister Arline Whitton; great-grandmother Rebecca Whitton; and many close relatives and friends.

GRACE (TRUPIANO) FURITANO

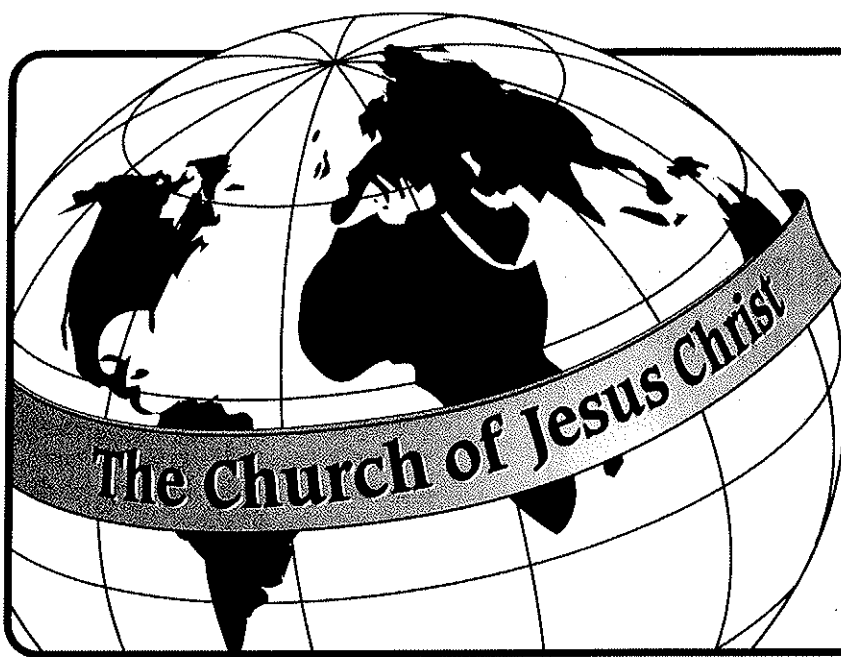
Sister Grace (Trupiano) Furitano passed onto her reward on June 24, 2002. She is preceded in death by her husband Brother John Furitano and son Joseph Furitano. She is survived by her daughters, Sister Rose Mary Ausilio, Sister Josephine McLennan and Sister Kathleen Furitano; three sisters, two brothers, eight grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

DONALD E. KENDALL SR.

Brother Donald E. Kendall, Sr., of the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch passed onto his reward on October 29, 2002. He is survived by his wife Evelyn; three sons, Donald, Kevin and Mark; one brother, Brother John Kendall and two sisters, Sister Juanita Stanko and Sister Gladys Stanish.

SHALIMAR FANNING

Shalimar Fanning of Lorain, Ohio, passed onto her reward on September 23, 2002. She was preceded in death by her father, Jay. She is survived by her husband, Bruce; mother, Betty Armstrong; brothers, Dan and Steve Armstrong; brother and sister-in-law, John and Sister Dora Armstrong and nephew Eric Armstrong.



The Gospel News

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Tiny Church Poised for Fight

(Editor's Note: The following article, written by Meaghan M. McDermott, was taken from the "Democrat and Chronicle" Newspaper, regarding our branch in Rochester, New York.)

Forty-three years ago, local members of The Church of Jesus Christ pooled their money, time and talents to raise a house of God on North Winton Road near Empire Boulevard.

Now, the tiny church's twelve members are pooling their resources for a different struggle: to keep the town from using eminent domain laws to turn their 1.6 acre church property into a ballfield.

Church leaders say the town is threatening them, but town officials say their intentions have been misunderstood. Officials say they'd never vote to seize the church – although they'd still like to purchase the property.

Over the summer, church leaders met informally with town officials to discuss the town's interest in adding the church property to George B. McAvoy Memorial Park.

McAvoy Park, home of two lighted softball fields, tennis courts

and a concession stand, is bordered by Route 590, Empire Boulevard, North Winton Road and The Church of Jesus Christ property.

"The park has reached a point where it needs to be revitalized," says Town Supervisor David Schantz, noting that the town plans to rebuild the park. "We're having problems with the lighting, the playing surface is tired and the lavatory facilities and parking are inadequate."

Schantz also noted that nearly 98% of all land in Irondequoit is already developed, leaving few places for the town to expand its recreational offerings.

He said the church parcel would be an ideal addition to McAvoy Park.

"With young families continuing to flock to Irondequoit, the demand for more facilities continues to increase," he said.

During those early negotiations, the town offered church leaders \$225,000 for the entire church parcel although no formal purchase offer was tendered.

Church leaders then countered with an offer to sell an undeveloped chunk of land behind the church, said Pastor Andrew Locci, who has lead the church's congregation for the past 10 years.

"We just wanted them to leave us enough room for the building and a small parking lot, but they turned it down," he said.

The church building, with its plain brick front and austere white sanctuary, holds a special place in Locci's heart. He joined The Church of Jesus Christ as a teen in the mid-1950's and in 1959 was one of many who helped build the structure.

Worldwide, The Church of Jesus Christ, which is based in Monongahela, Pa., has about 10,000 members in at least 24 countries, said Locci. Members of the nondenominational Christian church believe in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, but the church is not affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

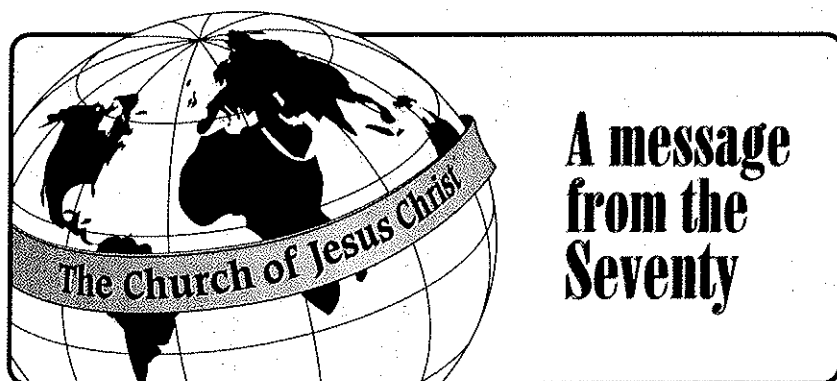
After their compromise proposal was shot down, church leaders asked the town for a letter outlining its intentions for the property.

They received an unpleasant surprise: The letter not only spelled out the town's desire to purchase the property, but also appeared to threaten to take the property through eminent domain.

Municipalities can use eminent domain procedures to force a sale and acquire land for public use, even if the owner does not want to sell.

According to the letter, "If for

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Growth in the Philippines

By Brother Ron Giovannone

While visiting with the newly established missions on the Island of Mindanao, Philippines this past fall, the Lord allowed me to witness the sculpting of a great work just now beginning to take form. I felt like Jeremiah, who in the 18th chapter of his book described watching a potter working the clay in his hands on the wheel until he could form a vessel that could be used.

The work in the Philippines started a few years ago by a fax sent to the Church from a man named Malachi Galing. Several Brothers from the Missionary Operating Committee (MOC) answered Malachi's repeated request for The Church of Jesus Christ to come to his town of Tagum, just outside of Davao City, Mindanao in November 2000. Just two years later, and after four successful trips, the work has grown to 265 baptized members located on two separate islands. In a very short time the Lord has worked with these humble saints and allowed them to grow and mature through each step of the spiritual process.

The saints in the Philippines are young spiritually but have a good understanding of the Book of Mormon and the history of the Church. Brother Rommel Desoloc, an Elder and assistant to Brother Malachi in charge of the missions in the Philippines, has translated the entire Book of Mormon into the Visayan language in less than six months (Visayan is the native language of the Island of Mindanao).

Within several months, we hope to have a Visayan Book of Mormon. This will greatly help in the growth of the work in the Philippines.

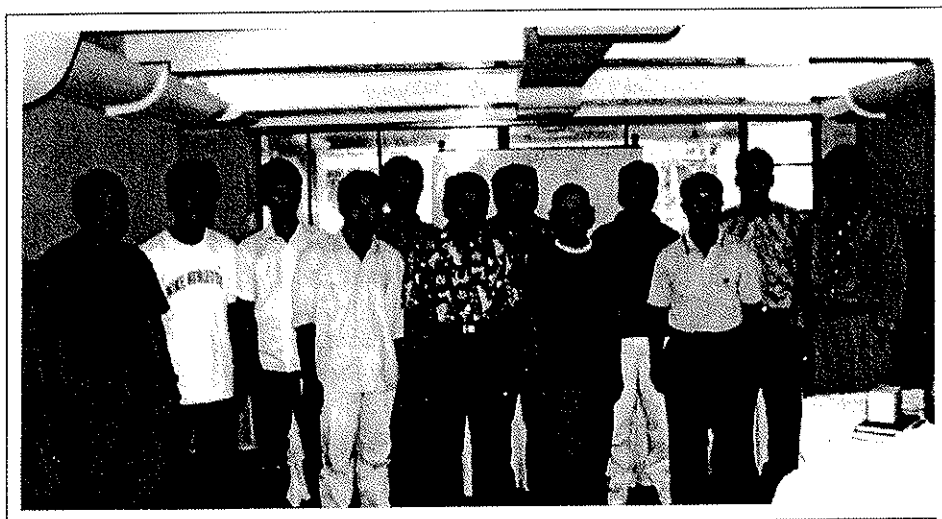
On this recent trip I made in October 2002 with Brother Art and Sister Martha Gehly, the saints of the Philippines took another major step in becoming well established in the Restored Gospel. There were five Elders in the Philippines and eight missions. Each Elder was assigned to a particular mission, and the ordained Teachers were used at the other missions when an Elder was unable to be present for their meetings. As the labors were growing, the need for additional ordained officers, especially

in the Ministry, was evident.

When we began to plan for this trip last fall, our prayers were that the Lord would move upon this work and call several individuals into various ordained offices that were needed. Our hopes were to look for potential candidates and encourage their growth to see them take on more spiritual responsibility. As the trip approached, it became apparent that the Lord was already two steps ahead of us. When we left Pittsburgh on a 30-hour journey to the Island of Mindanao, the Elders of the Philippines had requested 22 individuals to be ordained into various ordained offices, including eight candidates for the Ministry. Additionally, there were 12 requests for baptism (which quickly turned into 36 by the end of the trip).

It seemed like a daunting task to fulfill their request, considering all that we had planned for the brief time that we would have with them. As the trip progressed, however, it became apparent the Lord was using this opportunity to move this work from a newly formed mission to a well-established Church in the Islands of the Philippines.

This growth was most evident among the Ministry. As Brother Art and I began to form a ministerial board with the five Elders of the



Philippine Elders, left to right: Yolly Yangke, Rolando Caballes, Lucino Gutang, Cesar Celestino, Aurelio Galing, Alfonso Dapar, June Desoloc, Antonio Villarubia, Benjamin Sabino, Orencio Jaso, Rommel Desoloc, and Malachi Galing.

Philippines, our prayer to the Lord was that He would make His will known unto us about the potential candidates and to allow the existing five Elders to see the importance of the procedure they were performing. It was glorious to see how the Lord took the seven of us and created a bond that placed us into great spiritual unity. This spiritual unity allowed us to see how the Lord had called each candidate into the Ministry, and reaffirmed unto us the love that we had for one another.

It is glorious to see God's working hands begin to form His vessels of clay in the Islands of the Philippines. By the end of the week, when all the seminars, 20 ordinations, 36 baptisms, and children blessings were concluded, we spent the afternoon with Brother Rommel and his wife, Sister May, at their very humble home. There we rested after a long day, cooled by the shade of the bamboo awning and the refreshing juices from a fresh coconut, along with their family and friends sharing our lives together, which a few days earlier seemed to be worlds apart. This will be my lasting memory.

"With God, All Things Are Possible"

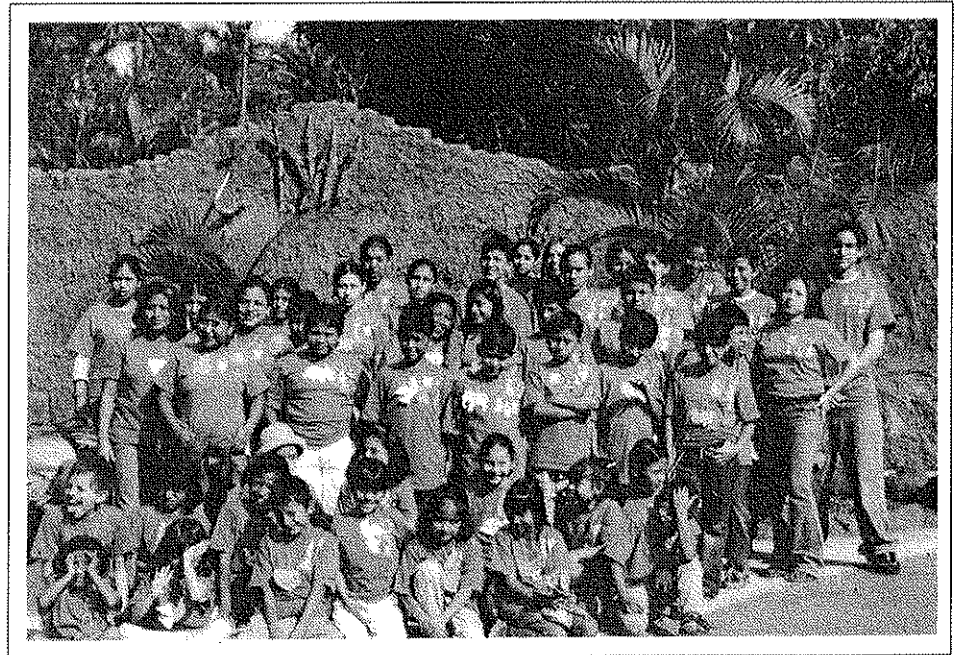
*By Sister Kristy Rogalla
and Brother James Draskovich*

The Guatemala Subcommittee held their second Vacation Bible School in Guatemala October 28-31, 2002. Sisters Judy Salerno, Karen Progar, Terri Everett, Kristy Rogalla, and Brother Jim Draskovich traveled to Guatemala to participate in this long-awaited event since last year's was canceled because of the September 11th events. This was the first trip to Guatemala for Sisters Terri and Kristy. Evangelist Paul Ciotti, Sr. joined the group the following Wednesday to assist Brother Luis Marroquin, the mission's only Elder.

The first Sunday service there began with our Sister Judy conducting a Sunday School lesson about the story of Abraham, his faith and God's promise to Abraham. She also concluded with the theme "With God, All Things Are Possible." Brother Luis followed with the theme of the promise to Abraham in his sermon followed by the visiting brother and sisters expressing themselves. During the anointing of Sister Ana Subuyuj, a Deaconess at the mission, Sister Gladys, Brother Luis' sister, had a vision in which she saw fire come down and surround Sister Ana and the Lord told her if Sister Ana had faith, He would heal her. Sister Ana

the story of the day. Sisters Kristy Rogalla and Darlene Marroquin taught the 7-9 year old class. Brothers Jim Draskovich and Luis Marroquin taught the 10-13 year olds, while Sisters Judy Salerno and Terri Everett taught the teenage class. Upon meeting these children, you feel an instant love for them and the love they have for you. Even though there is a language barrier, you are able to communicate to their hearts through the love of Jesus Christ.

Monday they learned the story of Daniel and the lion's den and the song *No Dinner*, which they learned in both English and Spanish, *No Hay Cena*. This song was written by



Children from Guatemala Vacation Bible School visiting the zoo.

later testified she could feel a warmth go through her body when Brother Luis Marroquin placed his hands on her head, and the pain left her body. Praise God!

The Vacation Bible School commenced the following Monday with the theme, "Pillars of the Scripture," focusing on the biblical stories of Daniel, Noah, David and Joseph. Almost 50 children were present for the four days. Each day consisted of a small chapel service, class with their respective teachers, a craft or activity, a snack and learning a song relative to

Sisters Barb Nuzzi and Kathy Genaro of the Ohio Region and remained a favorite for everyone for the week. Thank you, Sisters.

Tuesday's story was about Noah, which included a trip to the Guatemala Zoo with a lunch and ice cream snack. The children were very appreciative and well-behaved and all 45 children and 13 adults returned home safely despite a rather entertaining ride on a Guatemalan school bus.

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Message from the Seventy

Continued from Page 3

Wednesday the children learned the story of David and Goliath followed by an afternoon of games and activities with prizes for all ages. Thursday (the final day) the children learned the story of Joseph and practiced for the program that evening when all their parents and respective families would be in attendance. The program consisted of skits from each of the stories they learned during the week and songs in both English and Spanish. The program concluded with the entire congregation's singing, *Won't It Be Something to See Israel Smile* in Spanish. It was evident that the Lord and Israel were smiling at that moment. The evening's events concluded with presenting each participating child with a bag of treats and a certificate of completion followed by a snack and fellowship for those attending. Our hearts were conflicted with joy at all that took place and sorrow as the children one by one greeted us for the last time with tears in their eyes that the Vacation Bible School had come to an end.

Friday, the mission held a service in honor of the recent graduation of Rafael's oldest daughter, Zuli. He is the mission's music teacher. It is customary in Guatemala to hold a service to give God the honor and thanks for such an accomplishment. The mission was very honored to hold this service for Rafael and his family, as this was the family's request. Rafael has been teaching a small Youth Choir at the mission for about a year and a half and has grown to be a significant friend to all the membership of the mission. There were about 60 people in attendance consisting of the mission's membership and many of Rafael's family and friends attending The Church of Jesus Christ for the very first time. The service consisted of a short address from Brothers Luis and Paul regarding "putting God first in all things" and various group and individual musical selections.

Saturday consisted of a seminar for the mission with the theme of, "Communication, Love and Respect."

Brother Paul led the discussion referring to many scriptures pertaining to the need to love and respect one another; children, respect your parents. Parents, provoke not your children. During the discussion, Sister Karen was inspired to look for a scripture in Proverbs that states "a soft answer turns away wrath," thinking this should be read to the group. While she and Brother Jim were looking for the scripture, Bro. Paul asked if Proverbs 15:1 could be read, which is the verse with which our sister was inspired! The evening was spent in fellowship at our Brother Lorenzo and Sister Ana Subuyuj's home, with over 30 people in attendance in one room.

Brother Paul asked for the teenage group to sing the song, *Jesus My Friend*. During the song, our brother spoke in tongues and concluded with the interpretation, "O Israel, O Israel, I love you, Israel, I love you, Israel." Brother Luis then expressed that he had concern about the following day's events, our last Sunday service there. During this meditation with the Lord was when Brother Paul spoke in tongues, giving our brother the understanding that the Lord was preparing us for the next day's events. After a special prayer offered by Brother Paul,

Samuel Oliva asked for his baptism! This brother would join his wife in marriage and baptism the following week in addition to their son, Luis. Praise God!

Brother Paul then felt inspired to pray for Brother Jared Marroquin. During his prayer, he stated he did not know why the Lord had prompted him to pray, but during the prayer, he stated that Jared was to be called to a work and the Lord spoke and said, "I have called you to be a Deacon, thus saith the Lord." After the prayer, Jared spoke under the spirit, saying, "Gloria a Dios, Gloria a Dios, Gloria a Dios." Later, Brother Jared stated while Brother Paul was embracing him from behind, he could feel someone embracing him from the front. He also expressed that he felt a desire during the week to do a work for the Lord, asking to be called as a Deacon. After many other prayers, Brother Paul stated he had a desire to pray on all the baptized men in attendance to call them to a greater work. During many prayers, gifts were pronounced upon each member. Sandra Tuche, a teenager attending the mission also requested baptism. It was evident

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Jacqueline Juarez, Sandra Tuche, Samuel Oliva, Concepcion Oliva and Luis Oliva, all baptized on November 10, 2002 by Brother Luis Marroquin.



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:24-26).

Lot's wife made a tragic mistake in turning back to look at the cities of sin that God was destroying. He had warned them not to turn back or else they would be punished. This clearly represents a person's longing for the former life or ways of life, which should be left behind us, and never picked up again.

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

Jesus stated the awful condemnation that comes upon a person when they look back to their past, instead of looking forward to the great things God has planned for their life. A wonderful example was when Moses died, and Joshua was commissioned to lead Israel over the river Jordan into the Promised Land. God set aside a period of time to mourn over the death of Moses, but when the time of mourning was over, it WAS over! It was time to move on, forget the past, and receive God's greatest blessings that he had in store for Israel. They moved on into the Promised Land conquering city after city.

In our lives, often times the past haunts us. Be careful brothers, sisters and friends, this is a tool of the devil to impede our progress in obtaining God's blessings and plan for our lives. When we dwell on the past, we can never move forward. Some may dwell on how someone has hurt them, and they cannot forgive. Others dwell on situations such as broken marriages or relationships, the onset of terminal illnesses like cancer, miscarriage, the loss of a loved one, losing a job, and the list goes on and on. Some look back to the life they lived before knowing Jesus Christ. They revert back to addictions, fornication, lying, stealing, filthy communication from their mouths, and the like. Jesus said we are not fit for His kingdom if we do this. Try driving your car with your head turned looking out the back window. You will crash! It is the same way spiritually. We have to look forward to God's next move in our lives, otherwise we will crash.

No one said it is easy to forget the past. But just like Israel had a period of time to mourn over the death of Moses, we too must realize that when the past haunts us, it must be temporary. It MUST come to an end or else we can never move on. I love when I hear young people in the Church refer to themselves as "the Joshua generation." Yes, as the prophecies unfold before our very eyes, and as we see the "bloom on the vine," it is time to gird up our loins, stop the mourning, and cross the river Jordan to obtain our Promised Land! Read *The Songs of Zion* and see how every song looks forward, not backward. God wants us to prepare ourselves to cross Jordan. He wants to establish His Zion, and He wants each and every one of us to be a part of it, and not be left in the wilderness to die. But if we dwell on our past sins, discouragements, mistakes, and ways, we will never be fit for His kingdom.

Brothers, sisters and friends, forget the past. You can never relive it, or bring it back. Live for the future. The Bible says without vision, the people will perish. Make a decision today to ask God to wipe the slate clean in your life. Ask Him to forgive everything you've ever done that displeased Him. Start a new life of looking forward, striving to make each day better. Look forward and strive to keep step with God's plan for you. He will lead you from victory to victory because He loves you.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork

Dear Boys and Girls,

Sometimes we think that we are the only people with family problems or that in the old days, people had perfect lives. This isn't true. In the Bible we read about a young girl named Rebekah who really relied on God. First, she was brave enough to leave her family and go by camelback across the hot desert to marry a distant related stranger, named Isaac.

She was young and beautiful and had never had a husband yet. Isaac had turned forty years old. He was the promised son of Abraham, a man who truly loved the Lord. Abraham was getting older. He wanted his son to marry a woman who worshipped God, not to statues. He sent his trusted servant back to Haran, the land he and Isaac's mother, Sarah had come from.

The servant prayed that God would pick out the wife for Isaac. He told God, "I'll wait at the well and ask for water. When the right girl comes, let her answer and say she'll give my camels water too."

It was evening, and out came Rebekah with a big empty pitcher to fill with water for her family and cooking. When she saw the stranger, she offered him water and said everything the Lord had told him to ask!

Immediately the servant rejoiced and praised God! He'd found the special bride for Isaac! He gave her golden bracelets and an earring and asked to meet her family. He found out she was a distant relative of Isaac! This was a godly young woman for Isaac, and she agreed to leave home to marry him. Even though she was young, she trusted God.



When the camels returned over the dusty desert, she saw Isaac from far away. He'd gone out to meditate and talk with God when he saw the camels returning. She asked who he was, got off the camel, covered herself with a veil and went to meet him. The Bible says he loved her and was comforted since the death of his mother.

Twenty years passed with Rachel loving Isaac and having many responsibilities. But she couldn't have babies! She and Isaac prayed to the Lord. God spoke to her and told her she would have twin boys. He told her that each boy would grow into a huge family and that one of the nations that came from one son would be stronger than the other. He said the older one would serve the youngest.

Esau was the first baby out. He was very red and hairy. The second baby, Jacob, was holding on to the foot of Esau as he came out. Esau grew up to be a great hunter who liked the outdoors. His old father, Isaac, liked him best. But Rebekah remembered what the Lord said; she loved the second baby, Jacob, the best.

When they grew up, both boys loved each other, but fought.

One day when he was very hungry, Esau sold Jacob his rights as the first-born son. Then when their father went to give the special blessing, Rebekah had Jacob put on hairy wool, bring food and tell Isaac, who was now blind, that he was Esau.

So as God had said, the second son got the special blessing. Esau was so angry that he planned to kill Jacob. The Bible says that Rebekah told Isaac, "I am tired of my life because of the ungodly women that our son Esau married. If Jacob marries

someone like these women, what good will my life be? Send him back to Haran to find a godly wife."

She told Jacob, find a wife but stay there until Esau no longer wants to kill you. I will send a message to you when it is safe to return.

Jacob ended up staying twenty years in Haran. He fell in love with Rachel, but was tricked into marrying Leah, and worked six more years for the flocks of sheep and camel. We hope that Rebekah, the girl who relied on God, got to hear from her favorite son, but we know he was away the next twenty years.

Can you imagine how much she missed him? Can you think how many times she must have prayed to the Lord to keep him safe and give him a good wife? But she was a girl who grew into a woman who prayed and talked with God. Even surrounded by

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WORD SEARCH

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Branch and Mission News

Quincy, Florida Mission

The brothers and sisters in the Quincy Mission were blessed to have visiting with us Brother Frank Rogolino and Sister Pat Huggins. This was truly a surprise and a treat. Brother Frank opened the meeting with the hymn, *God Moves In A Mysterious Way*. The verse that he focused on was "His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour. The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan His work in vain. God is His own Interpreter, and He will make it plain." Brother Frank shared many experiences about his son Mark and how his heart was heavy many times because of Mark's life style. We learned a valuable lesson today about God's time is the right time although we may not understand at the present time. Sometimes we look at just the outward man, but God looks deep down inside and sees our needs rather than our faults.

Brother Charles and Brother Horace have been exhorting the saints to seek first the things of God and all other things will eventually fall in place. The Quincy Mission has been blessed with many visitors this month, as many as 12 visitors in one meeting. Some of the visitors were family members of the saints. The visitors have for over a month been worshipping and fellowshiping with the saints in Quincy. One visitor testified how she has visited many churches but never felt the love she experienced the first time she entered The Church of Jesus Christ. She stated that she's considering becoming a member of the Church soon. We ask our brothers and sisters to pray for this lady; her name is Dorothy. Betty Yants who has been around the church for 20 years also is faithful in attending and has always enjoyed the brothers and sisters. Jackie, a visitor who has been around the church for many years has expressed a desire to change her life as

well. Betty is Sister Dollie Holmes' sister and Jackie is her daughter.

On Wednesday, October 23, 2002, we had visiting with us Brother Allen and Sister Norma Tepperman from New Jersey. His mother and a friend from Mid-Georgia also visited with them. Brother Allen shared his testimony and told many wonderful experiences of how the Lord worked in his life through fasting and praying. His mother is not a member of the Church, but she was very receptive to the brothers and sisters in Quincy. Ilida is a young lady from Mid-Georgia who testified of God's goodness and mercy. She does not speak English, but Sister Norma interpreted for her. She asked the Church to pray for her family. When Brother Allen and Sister Norma asked her about coming to Quincy with them, Ilida felt her husband would discourage her, but to Ilida's surprise, he fully agreed to the visit. Ilida's husband told her he felt comfortable with the saints of the Church. This reminds me of the scriptures "Before you call I will answer." We must always let our light shine because people are watching us.

After the meeting we gathered in the kitchen to enjoy some hot soup that the sisters in the mission prepared for this special occasion. The Quincy Mission is expecting another treat on November 11, 2002. A busload of saints from the Tampa area will be visiting with us. We invite anyone to visit. You do not need an invitation, just come.

On Saturday November 9, 2002, Brother Sam Risola, Regional President, with First and Second Counselors, Brother George Kovacic and Brother Ron Morle met with the officers of the Quincy Mission. Brother Dennis Moraco was also in attendance. A very energetic and lively Spirit of the Lord was felt during the course of this meeting as we discussed the "Let's Grow" program of the Southeast Region.

On Sunday, November 10, 2002, the Quincy Mission was blessed with a charter bus of visiting brothers and sisters from the Forrest Hills Branch. The Quincy Mission's Sunday School class sang *This Little Light of Mine*,

I'm Going to Let It Shine. There were a total of nine visiting elders in attendance for the Sunday service. We had representatives from Miami, Florida to Atlanta, Georgia. The Quincy Mission would like the brothers and sisters to know how much we appreciate the sacrifice of all visiting the Quincy Mission.

Brother Ron Morle opened the service from Matthew: 10:5-8, the sending of the twelve Apostles. He preached in support of the region's excitement of how the "Let's Grow" program could help build stronger branches and missions throughout The Church of Jesus Christ. He encouraged all the saints to tell others about this Church and invite them to come visit The Church of Jesus Christ. He shared an experience of the power of fasting and prayer. Brother Ron stated that Atlanta shares meeting facilities with another organization that holds meetings on the upper floor of the facility and they are somewhat noisy. Even though the group that met above them became quite distracting, they did not take the matter in their own hands. They went to God in fasting and prayer. During the month of October the group has ceased meeting there. Jesus is our true friend He is able to handle any problem we encounter. The main focus of the meeting was, "Freely ye have received, freely give." There is no charge for the Gospel, just a commitment to serve God the remainder of our lives and with all our heart, mind and soul until God calls us home.

Sister Mandy Griffith sang *The Day He Found Me*. Brother Scott Griffith played the guitar for our sister. Brother Scott followed our Brother Ron by sharing a Thanksgiving experience of Sister Helen Campitelle from Detroit, Michigan. Her children were discouraged because they did not have Thanksgiving dinner, but God takes care of His own. A man came to the house and delivered all kinds of food. We are often reminded of the words of comfort, "I fed my people in the time of Moses and I will also feed them today." We serve an awesome

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Quincy, Florida Mission

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God! Brother Scott made an analogy of sports fans, illustrating how we as saints should always desire to be number one when it comes to our service to God for He has never left us alone.

Brother Dennis Moraco shared his excitement about coming to Quincy this weekend. He told his coworkers about his much-anticipated trip to Quincy to visit his brothers and sisters. One reply was "Are you talking about your brothers and sisters of your church?" He followed with the same subject matter of the preceding brothers. He started with go out and tell the people about the Church. We should take every opportunity available to share God's goodness. Brother Dennis shared many wonderful experiences of how exciting it is to go and tell others of Jesus. He also reminded us of the many whom once worshipped with us that need to hear the Gospel again. Just offer the invitation. Brother Dennis also mentioned that we should be quick to tell people about this Gospel and invite all.

Brother John Griffith shared with us how he had planned his life, but God had a much better plan. As a young lad he was baptized into the Church and a few years later the Lord gave him a wife. There was a very important lesson learned from Brother John on how we should, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." Brother John has been baptized for 39 years in The Church of Jesus Christ. The Forrest Hills Branch blessed us with a song, *Till We Meet Again*.

Brother Sam Risola, was the closing speaker. He summarized what the other brothers preached. Go out and tell your testimony because the world is looking for hope and there is no hope except in Jesus Christ. He thanked the saints of the Quincy Mission for all the hospitality and love shown through the weekend. We had a beautiful day with our brothers and sisters. All of our meetings are wonderful, but to have saints who were willing to sacrifice their day which started at 5:00 a.m. in the morning and

travel about four hours to be in a meeting with us was GREAT! "Love Oh Love Such Perfect Love" is the only way we can explain this trip!

The meeting was closed and we gathered in the kitchen for a meal that was prepared by the saints. It was so nice to fellowship with saints we have known for quite some time and the ones we met for the first time. It wasn't long before it was time to say goodbye, but we were thankful for the time that the brothers and sisters from Forrest Hills shared with us in the Quincy Mission.

Ordination in Monongahela, PA

On November 3, 2002, brothers and sisters attended the Monongahela, Pennsylvania Branch to witness the ordination of Brother Bob Nicklow, Jr. into the Quorum of Seventy Evangelists. Brother Jim Sgro opened the morning service in prayer and Brother Josh Nicklow followed with singing the hymn, *It's My Desire*.

Brother Joel Gehly was inspired to read the scripture about King Hezekiah in 2nd Chronicles 31:21 and explain how King Hezekiah was dedicated in all that he did to honor God, and that we should have that same desire and hope. Brother Joel challenged us if something was in our life that should not be there, to do a housecleaning like King Hezekiah when he told the priests to sanctify themselves and be prepared because God was going to do marvelous things. God's promises are the same to us as they were to King Hezekiah. Brother Joel also told the story about when King Hezekiah was sick at one point in his life and was ready to die. Isaiah came and told him he would die, so King Hezekiah turned his head to the wall and pleaded with God. The Lord spoke to Isaiah and told him to tell King Hezekiah that he had 15 more years. King Hezekiah wanted to know if these words were true, so Isaiah gave him a choice to see the shadow on the dial decrease or increase, speed

up or slow down. King Hezekiah wanted to see it decrease because he thought that was more magnificent. That's the love and promise God had for King Hezekiah and that's what we have in this day and time. Brother Joel asked us to reminisce about what God has done for each of us in our lives whether it be a healing, having a dream or vision, or going down into that liquid grave and becoming a part of His kingdom.

Brother John Mark D'Antonio followed having two thoughts in mind. The word "began" means there must be a beginning and we have to start somewhere as individuals, and also "seek" because we have to seek for God. Calling Brother Bob was fulfilling God's revelation. Brother John spoke about how Hannah couldn't have children and she pleaded with God that if He gave her a child she would raise him to serve Him. She took her son Samuel to Eli, and one evening Samuel asked Eli three times if he called him and Eli said, no the first two times, and told Samuel that God was calling him. So he told Samuel to say, "Speak my Lord." Sometimes we hear God's voice calling us, but we run to and fro. Brother John petitioned us to listen to the voice of the Lord, because the Lord is waiting for us to say, "I'm ready to hear." When we do that He will bless us. Every day He calls us to step up and be who He wants us to be. He needs each of us to put things aside and serve Him.

Brother Carl Frammolino said the word that stuck out in his mind was "prospered," which is what we do in the Gospel if we do it right. Brother Carl explained the position of an Evangelist using Ephesians 4:11-12 and Luke 10:1-6, and pointed out this job involves everyone because when you give your testimony, you are evangelizing the Gospel. Brother Carl introduced all the Evangelists that were present before Brother Bob, Jr. and his family sang his favorite hymn, *Hark the Voice of Jesus Calling*.

After they sang, Brother Bob Jr. was ordained into the office of an Evangelist. His father, Brother Bob Nicklow, Sr. washed his feet and Brother Jim Moore ordained him. The

congregation sang the hymns *Ready* and *How Will the Saints Rejoice to Tell* while the family greeted Brother Bob. Brother Bob then gave a beautiful and humble testimony.

Brother Paul Palmieri felt to speak about our responsibility using the scripture 2nd Corinthians 4:2-3, explaining we need to spread the Gospel to those who are lost. He related a saying Brother Sam Kirschner used to use, "Sometimes we think our light is so small, but you light a candle in a dark room and it shines brightly."

While several of the brothers administered sacrament, the congregation sang *At the Cross* and *My Jesus I Love Thee*.

Brother Don Ross read from Helaman 12:25, which states that there will be some cast off, not many and we have that responsibility to spread the Gospel to all.

We thank God for calling Brother Bob Nicklow, Jr. into the Quorum of Seventy and our prayers are with him. The Monongahela Branch would like to thank all the brothers and sisters that attended this glorious event. God bless you all.

Lake Worth

By Sister Josie Jasmin

Brother Sam Difalco, visiting elder from Michigan, opened our service with the theme, "The Light." God created the heavens and the earth and He said "Let there be Light," and it was done. The darkness was changed into light at His word. Once we were in darkness, once we were in sin, and then there came the light. Our eyes were opened and we saw the light, the truth of His gospel. Everyone needs to be converted and change the darkness into light through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Brother Sam read from John Chapter 1, verses 1-9:

1. In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was with *God*, and the *Word* was *God*.

2. The same was in the begin-

ning with God.

3. All things were made by *Him*; and without *Him* was not any thing made that was made.

4. In *Him* was *Life*; and the *Life* was the *Light* of men.

5. And the *Light* shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6. There was a man sent from *God*, whose name was John.

7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the *Light*, that all men through *Him* might believe.

8. He was not that *Light*, but was sent to bear witness of that *Light*.

9. That was the true *Light*, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Brother Sam asked, "Are we walking in the Light?" Walking in the light of God is the only way to walk. In Joseph Smith's experience, he saw the *Light* and heard the words, "*This is my Beloved Son*." Let your light so shine before man and glorify your father, which is in heaven. Place your light on a candlestick for every one to see, do not hide it under a bushel. Remember that *Jesus* is the *Light* and we must let *Him* shine through us.

Brother Gene Perri followed and expressed himself on the same theme, "The Light." Brother Gene stated that *God* enlightened man through *His Word* and through *His* commandments. Brother Gene then related the scripture concerning the three Hebrew children. They received the *Light of God's commandments* and would not bow down to any idol because the second commandment forbids it. They would only bow down to the *Living God*. *We must walk in the light of our fire!*

On Sunday November 10th, 2002, Brother Ron Carradi visiting from Fort Pierce opened our service with a hope and joy for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Brother Ron is elated to have found the restoration. We were encouraged to be strong in the Gospel and have courage for this day and time. He read from Daniel Chapter 3 concerning the three Hebrew children and how they would not bow down to the golden image. They were so convicted by God and his power and they spoke

with an assurance and courage to stand up for Him. Truth comes with commitment—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were fully committed to God. He also referred to the Apostle Paul and of how he was committed to the will of God and Jesus Christ. We were asked the questions, "Are we willing to go into the fire?" and "Can we stand the heat?" One thing that we must remember is that Jesus will go with us through the fire and sustain us! Another question was, "Can we make the same statement that Joshua made, *As for me and my house we will serve the Lord*?"

Sunday November 17, 2002, Brother Mike Radd opened our service and spoke on the restoration and the reign of peace. He also stated that creation is indeed a fact and that the Bible and Book of Mormon are true facts. There is no fiction in these two books of God and our Gospel. Brother Mike read from Revelations Chapter 12, concerning the woman clothed with the Sun. Brother Ron Carradi followed and stressed to us that we gain understanding through the scriptures, and emphasized to us the effect of the word of God in our lives. The scriptures are a guideline to direct us through life and our way to salvation. In this case, ignorance *is not* bliss. The salvation of our soul should be our main purpose.

God Answers Prayers

On Sunday, October 20, 2002 I experienced severe chest pain and my wife, Ruth, rushed me to the hospital in Lancaster, California. At 8:25am., I was taken into ER immediately. After the EKG I was diagnosed with a heart attack.

My wife immediately called our branch (which was in service). After it was announced, Brothers Pat King and Eddie Nester immediately left the service to be at my side in the ER. When they came into the room, it was as if two angels had walked in. They

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God Answers Prayers

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stayed at my side and gave me great spiritual support. I was in great discomfort and pain. Soon after, Brother Sal Azzinaro entered the room and he anointed me. After Brother Sal finished his prayer, the heaviness in my chest and the pain began to subside.

I was taken to a private room and a battery of tests was performed on me. On Monday at 3:00 p.m., the last test was finished and at that time I was totally free of pain. I was perfectly normal. The doctor came into my room with the results of the tests and said they could not find anything wrong and that there was no evidence of a heart attack and that my heart and all the vitals were perfectly normal. He couldn't give any medical explanation for what I had experienced. I promptly said I could tell him why he didn't find anything and I told him my Elder anointed me and God healed me. I was released two hours later.

I'm very thankful for the prayers of the brothers and sisters that were offered on my behalf. God truly answered your prayers and healed my body. I praise God with all my heart.

Brother Pete Ferrante

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Note of Thanks

We, the family of Kelsey Marie Lubienski, want to thank all the brothers, sisters and friends for your many prayers, cards and phone calls to comfort us in the tragedy that we have experienced. Our greatest strength comes from the Lord.

Kelsey was a six-year-old angel, and the shock of the accident and her passing was more that we can bear. We would be totally lost without God's help and your prayers. Your thoughtfulness and prayers give us strength to continue life without this little angel, who was so full of life and excitement.

Your continued prayers are encouraged, especially for her parents, Daniel and Becky Jo Lubienski and her brother Taylor. Again we are very thankful to all of you who have remembered us during this very difficult time.

Thank You,
Brother Paul and Sister Arline Whitton
and family

Tiny Church Poised for Fight

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some reason a negotiated settlement cannot be reached, the town will proceed under New York State Eminent Domain Procedure Law to acquire the property."

Locci said it's hard to misunderstand that statement.

"Now they say there's still room for negotiation, but according to this letter we don't have any choice," he said.

Town Attorney Stacey Romeo, who wrote the letter, said she was just providing what church members had asked for.

"We were under the impression they needed a heavy-handed letter to take to the home church in Pennsylvania," she said. "We thought this language would help facilitate a sale."

Schantz said the letter was never intended to be a threat and that the outcry is premature.

"We're not trying to be onerous or heavy-handed," he said. He said the letter referred to eminent domain because it is one of the town's options. "That's not to say that's what we're going to do," he added.

Town Board members now are scrambling to avoid being tarred as church-stealers.

Michael Garbin said he does not believe the board would ever support taking over the site, a process known as condemnation.

"If we can't agree to a purchase offer, that parcel won't be part of any future renovation of McAvoy Park," he said.

Board members Graceann Frederico and Paul Failing issued a written statement echoing Garbin's sentiments and rightly pointing out that the board has not voted for, approved or even discussed starting eminent domain proceedings on the property.

Despite the flap over the letter, Locci said he's still willing to discuss selling the empty land behind the church.

"We're not hostile, but we want to keep our building," he said.

Schantz, too, said that he's hopeful the town and the church can reach an agreement over the land.

Nonetheless, church members are still preparing for a David vs. Goliath fight.

"Just because we're small doesn't mean we're going to lie down," said Betty Panfile of Fairport, who, along with her husband Pat joined the church 18 months ago.

The Panfiles, other church members and at least one resident of

the nearby Highland Bay apartment complex on North Winton Road have been canvassing the neighborhood with petitions opposing any eminent domain proceedings.

"If you need another ballfield, you should be able to find a place where you don't have to condemn a church to build it," said Pat Panfile.

(Editor's note: Following is an E-mail sent to the Church from Sister Betty Panfile on November 19, 2002):

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Good news, our Church is saved! The town of Irondequoit, NY has altered its plans to take our Church via Eminent Domain.

This evening at a town board meeting, Town Supervisor, David Shantz, issued a statement saying, "I want to clarify some confusion. I do not, and will not, support the use of Eminent Domain as it relates to The Church of Jesus Christ. We are putting forth a new proposal that will keep The Church of Jesus Christ in its present location. We will have continuing discussion with The Church of Jesus Christ to draft a new plan and we will be meeting with Pastor Locci in early December and arrive at a conclusion."

Brothers and sisters, we thank you for your beautiful e-mails, your continuing prayers, and all your support and concern. Once again we see that through prayer all things are possible. None of us were experienced in dealing with this type of problem so we prayed for God to guide us in everything we did. We truly believe that that is exactly what happened.

We believe we do not need any more e-mails sent to the town officials. They were inundated with e-mails, thanks to so many of you, and they worked. However, it will be the December meeting that will finalize our situation.

God bless you and we'll keep you in our prayers.

Sis Betty

Message from the Seventies

Continued from Page 4

Christ was present and the spirit moved from one person to the next, including the very small children weeping from the love of God. What a sight to behold, as the entire group bid us farewell that evening, many filled with the tears of joy!

Sunday was the final full day of our trip. After discussion with Brother Dennis Moraco, Chairman of the Guatemala Subcommittee, the Elders decided to ordain Brother Jared that day. Brother Dennis also extended the liberty to Brothers Paul and Luis to call anyone else the spirit directed, as Brother Paul ironically had communicated the prior evening that he felt others being called. As a result, the spirit prompted the calling of Brother Willy Subuyuj, oldest son to Brother Lorenzo and Sister Ana, to the office of a Deacon as well.

The meeting began with Brothers Jim and Paul reading the responsibilities of a Deacon to Brothers Jared and Willy. Then Brother Jim washed Brother Jared's feet and Brother Lorenzo Subuyuj washed his son's feet. Jared and Willy were ordained by Brother Luis and Brother Paul, respectively. During the ordination of Brother Jared, Sister Judy spoke in the gift of tongues and the interpretation was, "I have manifested myself unto you. I'll be a light to your path. I have anointed your head with oil because I will do great things and my glory will be manifested to your people. My Holy Ghost is in this place. Thus saith the Lord." This interpretation was given to Rafael's wife, a first-time visitor. Brother Paul expressed that, while Brother Jared was ordained by his father, the Lord spoke to him and stated that Jared would have the cloak of humility as his grandfather, Brother Joseph Ciotti. Sister Darlene then disclosed while she was carrying Jared before his birth, the Lord instructed her she would have a son and his name would be Jared Joseph Ciotti. Until then, she said he never knew the significance of his middle name.

Rafael's wife stated she saw a vision of Christ standing between

Brothers Jared and Willy during the ordination and His arms raised and His spirit formed a cloud that hung over the congregation.

Brother Paul delivered the message from I Peter 2:5. He passed five smooth stones brought back from Israel around to the congregation. He said these stones were once rough but later became smooth through erosion or the refining process and compared it to the refining process of the spirit. He explained that David knew that the smooth stones were the ones he should use.

In conclusion, there were so many blessings during this short week, too numerous to mention in one article. We continue to solicit your prayers for our Brother Luis and his family and the mission in Guatemala. We are all very confident that the Lord is doing a great work there and calling many workers. We are all very grateful and humbled to the Lord for the opportunity to participate and witness all that transpired, for truly, "With God, All Things Are Possible."

The Children's Corner

Continued from Page 6

Esau when he was angry, and his crude pagan wives, she trusted God.

And God's promises were fulfilled. Both Jacob and Esau grew up to be powerful men. Esau even forgave Jacob later and became friends again. But Jacob still had the greatest blessings. God blessed both brothers; they each had twelve sons and one daughter, and thousands and hundreds of thousands of descendants. The Jews and the Native American Indians are Jacob's children. The Choice Seer will be from Jacob. Even Jesus, the Son of God, was born to Jacob's family in the future. Every promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Rebekah came true. God keeps every promise, even through the darkest years. You can trust Him. He cares for you.

Love,
Sister Jan

* WEDDINGS *

Brother Kevin Perri and Doreen Dolan were united in holy matrimony in the Metuchen, New Jersey Branch on July 20, 2002.

Children Blessed

Maggie Dawn Thompson, daughter of Jeremiah David and Amber Dawn Thompson was blessed on November 24, 2002 at the Vanderbilt, Pennsylvania Branch.

Kerrick Andrew Hemmings, son of Shawn and Sonya Hemmings was blessed on September 29, 2002 in the Lakeside, Arizona Branch.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sister Jolene Hemmings was baptized on September 22, 2002 at the Lakeside, Arizona Branch. She was baptized by Brother Herbert Hemmings, assisted by Brother Harry Smith and confirmed by Brother Larry Watson.

Brother Daniel Joseph Pizzaia was baptized on December 1, 2002 in the Edison, New Jersey Branch. He was baptized by Brother Bob Pizzaia and confirmed by Brother Phil Arcuri.

Spiritual Anniversaries

Sister Carmella Peterkin of the Spartanburg, South Carolina Mission celebrated her 50th anniversary as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ. A celebration dinner occurred on July 14, 2002.

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to those that mourn the loss of loved ones. May God bless and comfort you.

ASSUNTA FEOLA

Sister Assunta Feola of the Bronx, New York Branch passed on to her reward on Monday, January 6, 2002. She was an ordained Deaconess in The Church of Jesus Christ. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Salvatore Feola. She is survived by her daughter, Ilva Feola son, Luigi Feola; and three granddaughters, Gina Brown, Adrienne and Lisa Pacifico.

FENISIA (FRAN) VACCARO

Sister Fenisia (Fran)Vaccaro of the Bronx, New York Branch passed onto her reward on November 19, 2002. She is survived by her husband, John Vaccaro; two sons, Louis and John Vaccaro; two daughters, Elaine Webb and Paula Kessler; five grandsons; five granddaughters; two great-grandchildren; two brothers, Al and Armondao Tarantelli; and four sisters, Gemma Charletto, Sister Pearl Zinzi, Mary Moran and Gloria Barresi.

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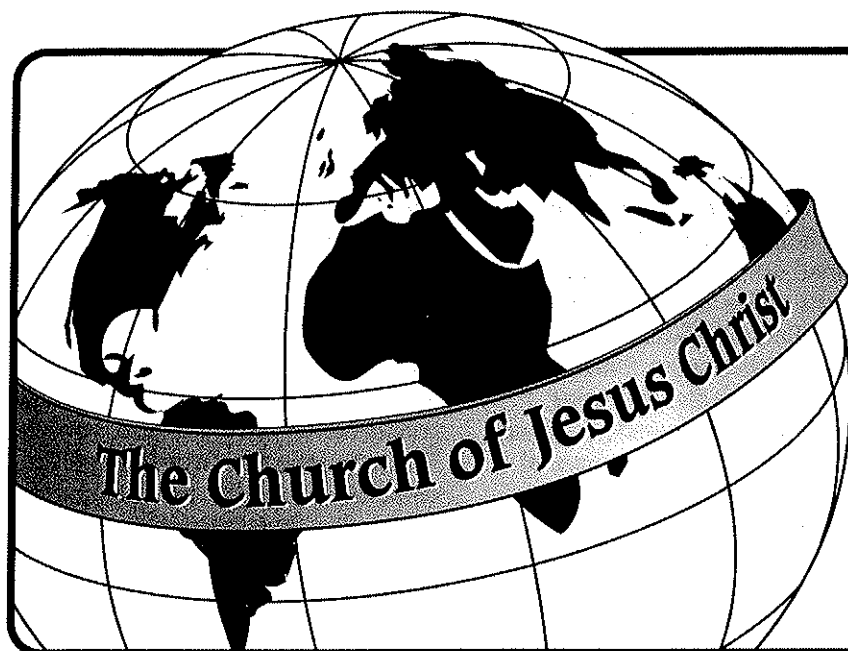
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MARY THOMAS OLIVER DiFEDE

Sister Mary Thomas Oliver DiFede of the New Brunswick, New Jersey Branch passed onto her reward on November 14, 2002. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Joseph Difede; son, Charles Thomas Oliver; and grandson, Jared Ross. She is survived by her daughter, Rita Ross; brother, Antone Thomas; five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



The Gospel News

World Headquarters Monongahela, PA, USA

March, 2003

Volume 59, No. 3

News from the Meru and Kisii Tribes

By Evangelist Mark Kovacic

In Kenya, East Africa, The Church of Jesus Christ has two members from the Meru Tribe. As with many of the nations in Africa, Kenya is populated by various tribes. Most of the saints in Kenya are of the Kisii tribe. But Brother Josphat and Sister Jane Mugambi are of the Meru tribe.

To give you some perspective, the distance between the main towns of the two tribes is about 15 hours by bus. Fortunately, the tribes are considered "sister" tribes and their languages are very similar. (In Kenya, Swahili is the national language, and then each tribe has its own dialect.) We say fortunate, because Brother Josphat has taken absence from his family in Meru to be with the Church in Kisii to labor on the translation and proofreading of the Book of Mormon into Swahili with Brother Stephen Osaka and some other brothers. He has been in the Kisii District now for four months on this "labor of love" project.

Just as important, he is fellowshipping with the saints there, as evidenced by the following excerpt from a recent e-mail:

"Last Sunday I had a chance to

visit the Church branch of Itibo [village]. I visited the Church with Brother Nyangaresi [Elder] and Brother Julius the Deacon was also there. I had a chance to read a few chapters from the Holy Scriptures. The Lord's Table was also prepared by the Deaconess and Brother Nyanyaresi served communion. The Holy Spirit of God moved and the entire Church was so blessed. I enjoyed the whole service along with the saints. It was so wonderful and God's love is really unlimited."

Please remember our brothers in your prayers, as their work of translating and proofreading is soon to finish, so that the saints in Kenya will have the Book of Mormon in their own language. What a wonderful day that will be!

Also, we received a report from Brother Stephen Osaka, National Director of the Church in Kenya. He noted, "The general condition of the Church is well with experiences of healings. The Church is making advance and gains with the restored gospel. We have new villages desiring to hear the Restored Gospel." He also stated that there are 150 people in three new villages who have heard

the sound of the Restored Gospel and many who have received healings and are looking forward to their baptisms.

(Continued on Page 11)

Notice

Please visit the Church's web site, (thechurchofjesuschrist.org) to find a new tab on the left side of the home page entitled, "Gospel News." After clicking on this tab, you will find select, feature articles and items from the *Gospel News*.

The advantage of this site is that items not printed in the paper issue of the *Gospel News* can be printed here (*Gospel News* guidelines still apply.) Also, select items, which are printed in the paper issue of the *Gospel News*, can be viewed on-line in advance. The biggest advantage is that brothers, sisters and friends throughout the world who may not receive the *Gospel News* by mail, can read select articles and items by accessing the Church's web site.

My prayer is that it will be a blessing to all. God bless you.

Brother Carl Huttenberger Jr.
Gospel News Editor

A Testimony

I was baptized by Brother Willie Brown into The Church of Jesus Christ on May 13, 1979. I had hands layed on me by Brother James Crudup for the reception of the Holy Ghost.

Sad to say, I left The Church of Jesus Christ a few years later after a much troubled marriage. I did not understand why after my baptism, small problems became bigger problems. I asked the saints many questions but my troubled mind did not find answers.

I left the truth and embraced a false concept that you can serve God anywhere. Looking back, the truth was revealed to me before I was baptized, but because I did not understand why I was going through so much tribulation in my marriage, I departed from the faith and doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nonetheless, God was merciful to me and gently and lovingly showed and guided me back home to the true Church of Jesus Christ.

After being away from the Church for a few years, an interest arose in me to search other religions. Mind you, I thought I could serve God anywhere and that The Church of Jesus Christ was not the only place to worship God. I began to inquire of people about the Jehovah Witness belief. I briefly studied with a woman of that denomination, but I found myself not satisfied with their literature and beliefs. They believe only 144,000 will be saved. But we believe the words of John when he saw a "number no man could number" (Revelations 7:4-9).

I looked into the Catholic Church but could not accept that they deem the Pope and Jesus Christ as equal. We believe Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man (1st Timothy 2:5).

As time went on, I heard about this religion called Islam. I began searching and studying with Islamic group members.

Not long after studying with them, I began to ponder in my heart to

God if I should embrace Islam and follow this man, Mohammed (since Muslim's believe Jesus Christ and Mohammed are prophets and that Mohammed is the last and greatest prophet of them all). While pondering which religion to choose, I had an experience. I heard the following words in my mind repeatedly; "Stand up stand up for Jesus ye soldiers of the cross. Stand up stand up for Jesus, He must not suffer loss." I didn't know what to do! Which way would I turn? I was at the fork in the road. I had to make a decision. I liked what the Muslims were saying so I pushed Jesus Christ out of my mind and embraced Islam. I took my Shahada, meaning an oath to follow prophet Mohammed and embrace Islam.

I practiced Islam nearly a year and found myself increasingly unhappy and confused to say the least. I found myself comparing The Church of Jesus Christ with Islam. I kept the struggle to myself but I could hear the ministry of The Church of Jesus Christ preaching the truth to me in my mind. Things I thought I had forgotten were brought back to my memory. I often experienced this when I heard the Imam (meaning minister) preaching what seemed to be the truth. I did not witness the power of God's love in Islam. I did not witness the gifts of the Holy Spirit (1st Corinthians 12). I met some nice people but I was not satisfied, but very much confused. God brought it back to my memory that we ought to go into our secret closet and fast and pray (Matthew 6:1-8 and 16-18). So I went to God in prayer and fasting until I got an answer. God answered me!

I had a dream. I was standing in a large spacious room. The room was dimly lit as only a small amount of natural light filtered into the room. There were many windows with pink curtains. Around my neck was a choker with two cocoons affixed to it. The choker was more like a thick cord and very tight. The cocoons looked like silken threads a caterpillar would spin around itself before transforming into a butterfly. I remember pulling the larger cocoon

off the choker. I proceeded to open it and found nothing inside. It was hollow and black inside. God immediately gave me the interpretation to know that the hollow black empty shell inside was me. I chose Islam and had nothing. "*Outside the fold nothing there, empty there.*" I then proceeded to open the other cocoon. When I opened it, three butterflies came out. God gave me the interpretation. The three butterflies were a representation of my three natural children. The larger of the three was representing my eldest child who flew into the midst of darkness, which filled this large spacious room. The smaller (or younger) butterflies were stuck together. I had to gently separate them. They too flew into the midst of darkness. I then proceeded to walk over to one of the many large windows and tried to open it. I found this to be a difficult task because the window seemed to be stuck as though with old paint. I pushed with all my strength to open the window. Finally, I pushed it up and pulled back on the curtain. I wanted all three butterflies to make it to the light. I remember when I opened the window a screen separated the inside from the outside and in the lower right corner of the screen there was a hole. I looked through the hole in the screen. It was so beautiful outside! It was exceedingly bright and the plants were so vividly green. I truly wanted all three butterflies to make it to the light (John 8:12). That was the end of my dream. When I woke up I knew God had heard and answered my prayer. Within one year God gave me the full interpretation of the dream.

Things began to happen. My eldest child wanted to leave home because he didn't want to practice Islam anymore. I was taught in Islam that your children must pray the five prayers with you even if it is by force. So I would make him pray. My eldest child wanted to live with a relative who was not in fellowship with God. (I remembered the larger of the butterflies flew into the midst of darkness first). My two younger children were submissive and followed my every command, even if they didn't

want to. My second child was teased at school for wearing an Islamic scarf. She hated wearing it, but would not take it off despite getting into fights. I wanted out of Islam, but I didn't know how to get out. My two youngest children were very close, but they too flew into the midst of darkness. (Years later they were both baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ. They found the light!) In Islam they believe once a Muslim, always a Muslim and if you backslide or leave the religion, you go through hell fire when you die. This made me scared to leave Islam but in my heart, I already walked away. I stopped going to the meetings and withdrew from all Islamic functions. I was so frustrated and confused I didn't know what to do, but I continued to pray the five required prayers daily.

One night I heard the doorbell ring. It was Sister Cathleen Gamble. I was happy to see her. She asked me if she and her family could spend the night. Of course I said yes. I didn't realize that God had sent her to me. She told me that while she and her family were driving to another sister's home to spend the night, a voice told her, "Go to Sister Anna's house." She told me her husband didn't question her, nor refuse because he knew the Lord was working. I began to tell Sister Cathleen (Cat) many things that were troubling me; that had me feeling "choked" since I obeyed Islam. While I was talking to her, she had a vision. She saw a tall man with long black hair wearing a white robe stand behind me, but his feet never touched the floor and then he vanished. She said to me, "Now I know why the Lord sent me here. Whether you obey The Church of Jesus Christ or not, I did what I was supposed to do." She proceeded to give me much sober-minded advice. That night I finally felt free from my conflict. I knelt to pray the way I was taught in The Church of Jesus Christ. I hadn't done that in a very long time. The next morning was Sunday. I awoke visualizing my baptism. I decided to go to The Church of Jesus Christ that morning.

It was the Atlantic Coast

Region's conference that day. As I walked in, a brother was preaching and he was welcoming the saints home! He asked if any wanted prayer to come forward. My heart began to pound and race within my chest. I couldn't hold back the tears, but I didn't want anyone to see me crying. The elder said he felt someone needed prayer but that if they were embarrassed to do it today, to go back to their branch and be prayed for next Sunday. This is exactly what I wanted to do! I asked God quietly to spare my life another week so I could return to my branch of Freehold, New Jersey the following week and make myself right. God granted my desire and I was renewed into the truth. God is so good, patient and long-suffering!

After attending Church regularly, I shared with Sister Cat something that was puzzling me. I told her I traveled the same route to work daily. There was a large billboard that said, "The way home is through Jesus Christ." There was a picture of a man looking into an open Bible. I saw this for two weeks prior to coming back to Church. I told her that after I had come back to Church, I looked for the billboard and it was gone! Sister Cat replied, "That was for you! It served its purpose." God was pointing me to the way home, through Jesus Christ (3rd Nephi 31:15,21). Oh what comfort to my soul to know Him (Genesis 28:16). I remember the words of Sister Cat before she passed away, "The truth will set you free."

Sister Anapoweia Reid
Freehold, New Jersey

Life Testimony: How I got Jesus

By Brother Ram Baral

I was born in Nepal into Hinduism's highest caste, as a Brahmin. My father and forefathers were Hindu High Priests in the Royal Palace of Nepal, the only Hindu

kingdom in the world. But although I first worshipped Krishna and studied the Vedas and labored diligently in the Hindu religion, I felt strangely empty of the truth.

I saw quickly that the Hindu religion with its emphasis on Karma and the endless cycle of reincarnation was not an answer to eternal life. I searched to find the one true God. My quest took me from Hinduism to Buddhism, Lamaism, Taism, Islamism, Jainism, Sikhism, Judaism, and all kinds of religions, finally to Jesus Christ.

I have studied palmistry, astrology, soothsaying, hypnotism, enchanting, snake charming, necromancing, and all the various offerings of idolatry, but found them all deadly and wanting.

Finally after studying in Nepal and India, I found a Bible and began to study about Jesus Christ in 1980. I discovered the truth of Jesus that I am not righteous just because I was born in Brahmin. In fact, I was a sinner. Then I discovered that Jesus is loving and a forgiver of sins and His reward is eternal life. I found Jesus in my heart when I knelt down and prayed confessing my sins and by asking His mercy and power of blood to clean my sins away. Thus, I accepted Jesus as my personal Savior. Then I knew I didn't choose Him but He chose and ordained me to teach His truth.

After my discovery of Jesus and His truth, I was disowned by my parents and family members. On July 27, 1989, I was visiting the hospital where my father was declared to die any minute due to lung cancer. I got a chance to speak about Jesus to him. He heard the message so well. He believed the Word of God, "Arise, take your bed, and go home." Then he left the hospital trusting in the Lord completely. He never died of cancer. He is still alive. Then by continuous praying, love, faith, and by studying the truth, my mother, brothers, and sister and some of the neighboring relatives also believed the Gospel one by one.

An Experience

OUR FATHER'S TESTIMONY

Our father, Brother Nicholas Ritz, left us the most precious legacy, the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. By his example, we learned that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

He was called at the age of 15 to be a member of the Church. Later he became a barber, married, had eight children, and moved from Pennsylvania to Ohio; then retired to Miami, Florida. He was also an ordained Deacon and Teacher in the Church.

Through the years we saw a happy man, one filled with the joy of the saints. In times of adversity, he prayed and worked harder to support his family. He was healed of afflictions many times by calling upon the Elders for anointing. His trust was always in the Lord. Dad meditated on the Lord day and night, often praying out loud, "bless The Church of Jesus Christ and large family you have given me."

"My growth in the Church was very slow. Now that the Lord has given me longevity, I read the fine points of the Gospel, which gives us a bright future, the building of the kingdom here on earth; the Peaceful Reign. Search the prophecies (Isaiah and The Book of Mormon). If we have this knowledge, we will exercise our faith."

At the age of 96, the Lord called our father home. He was a "man of God" to all that knew him, displaying his unshakable faith in the Lord as the only way to live. On April 29 at 1:30 a.m., Eileen was praying for the Lord to have mercy on our father. In the midst of her prayer, she heard, "Welcome home, my good and faithful servant... welcome home my good and faithful servant, henceforth, a crown of righteousness is for you." Dad's memorial service was on May 1, 2002, his 81st spiritual birthday.

Sister Betty Gennaro
Sister Eileen Katsaras



Our Women Today

Great Lakes Area Fellowship Weekend

By Sister Linda Boyle

The Great Lakes Area Ladies' Uplift Circle held a Fellowship Weekend at the Holiday Inn in Dearborn, Michigan on March 16-17, 2002. Our theme was "Women in Missionary Work." After opening prayer, Sister Joann Cotellesse, Area President, opened with comments of how she felt that we would all receive a blessing and encouraged us to put all our cares and concerns aside for the weekend. She also read the 19th Chapter of Alma, about Abish being the first woman missionary in the Church.

Our afternoon seminars were taught by Sisters Linda Ali, Judy Salerno and Karen Progar. Sister Judy's subject was mentally preparing ourselves to do the work of the Lord and spreading the word of the Gospel to those whom we meet daily in our lives. Some of the ways of getting closer to God are to study the scriptures daily and fast and pray often. She also stated that we should use kind words when we are talking to people, in order to draw them to the Church. Jesus Christ is the vine. We are the branches. He put us on this earth to bear much fruit.

Sister Rosanne Champine sang one of her songs called *The Pearl*.

Sister Karen's subject was physically preparing ourselves for missionary work. Some of the ideas were to get your natural lives in order, including your finances while getting your physical being in shape.

Sister Linda's topic was, "Taking Action." After you have prepared yourself mentally and physically, you need to put into Action spreading the Gospel forth as sisters in this Church.

Sister Ruth Gehly was the evening meeting's guest speaker. She spoke regarding her role as the wife of

a missionary and the support she provides taking care of the home. Sister Ruth also shared the blessings, which she received when she was able to go on missionary trips with her husband, Brother Joel.

Brother Rick Elzby from Meaford and Brother Joel Gehly from Erie were our guest speakers on Sunday. Brother Rick expounded on Romans 1:5 in which is stated that we can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens us. He also read Revelation 12:10, concluding by reminding us that everyone in the Church, young and old alike, can be a missionary.

Brother Joel shared some of his experiences in the Philippines and how the Lord is opening the door for the Church with the people there. He emphasized that we need to shed our light and people will know us by the love we show for one another. He stressed that we must first seek the kingdom of heaven and assured us that all things needed will be added to us.

The meeting was then open for testimony, which gave us the blessing of hearing the sisters praise the Lord for His goodness in their lives. There was a wonderful spirit in the anointing of the sisters, which followed. God's blessings were truly felt by one and all who attended the weekend. We left feeling inspired to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this world.

Announcement

General Ladies' Uplift
Circle Conference

Date:
Saturday, April 26, 2003

Time:
10:00 a.m.

Place:
Hopelawn, New Jersey Branch

Plan to attend a spirit-filled day with us!



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

In the Book of Revelations, Jesus instructs John to write letters to the seven churches that were established throughout the area of Asia minor. At this time, there was still only one church, The Church of Jesus Christ, so these would be like modern day branches of the Church. During this time, the seeds of apostasy were stirring. Not long afterwards, there was a complete falling away, and many "copycat" pagan churches came into being, while The Church of Jesus Christ was taken away for 1260 years.

In these letters, Jesus begins to speak to each church one by one. He points out their strengths and weaknesses. In some cases He condemns, in other cases He praises. In all cases, He was speaking the truth to them regarding their condition.

When The Church of Jesus Christ was restored after the 1260 years of apostasy, an experience was given that we are the "Church of Philadelphia." One of the churches that Jesus dictated a letter to, through John, was in Philadelphia, located in Asia minor (probably in modern day Turkey). He said to them:

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Revelations 3:8).

This verse is so prophetic to our day since The Church of Jesus Christ has an "open door" to the world, and no one is trying to stop us. The Church is going forward throughout the world with lightning speed! In addition, the Church does have a "little strength." We certainly are not like other rich and naturally powerful churches. In fact, most people still haven't heard of us. Yet, we have striven to "keep His Word" by being fiercely protective of the faith and doctrine. He later promises that He would keep the Church from the "hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world" because we have "kept the word of His patience." Jesus was pleased with the Church of Philadelphia. He is pleased with The Church of Jesus Christ today. The question is, is He pleased with you and me individually?

Just being a member of the Church is not going to "save" you. But we are going to be judged as individuals. Although it is beautiful to read His promise to the Church of Philadelphia (our Church today), we should read what He says to the other six churches and check ourselves to be sure we are not guilty of any of the things He condemns.

The church in Ephesus was one that was very active. They probably were involved in a lot of outreach programs, and had lots of activities. But they lost their first love. Do we get so involved in "activities" in the Church that we lose sight of the importance of taking time to nurture a loving personal relationship with our Father? If so, all the works we do mean nothing. The church in Pergamos had some who were holding onto pagan customs and rituals. When we joined The Church of Jesus Christ, did we leave it all behind? If we came from other churches, did we truly abandon doctrines and beliefs that were false, and accept the truth? Did we leave the old man or the old woman in the waters of baptism? The church in Thyatira allowed a false prophetess to teach them that fornication was acceptable, and other false teachings. Do we hear other teachings, which are NOT sound doctrine and accept them? Do we allow Satan to whisper in our ear, "It's okay to sin a little?" Jesus called the church in Sardis "dead." Are we "numb" to the spirit of God? As King Benjamin asked, if we once felt to sing the song of redeeming love, can we do so now? The world can weigh us down heavily, but is it worth spending so much time focusing on natural things (which will perish) and lose eternal life? Lastly, He told those of the church of Laodicea that they were "lukewarm." Do we come to church whenever we want, and then criticize everything and everyone? Do we pray and read infrequently or not at all? Do people around us even know that we are servants of Jesus Christ?

Let's make sure we fit the category of those in the Church of Philadelphia. With wars and tribulation around the world imminent, it's time to stand like never before in the light of His truth. He said to the Church in Philadelphia, and is saying to us today:

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Revelations 3:11).

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork

Zeniff's Dream and His Great Battles

(See Omni 27-30 and Mosiah Chapter 9.)

Dear Boys and Girls,

In the days of King Benjamin's father, there were amazing Nephite warriors who were sent out to watch and spy on their enemies, the Lamanites. For over four hundred years, there had been great hatred on the part of the Lamanites against the Nephites. The Lamanites constantly tried to rob and murder the Nephites. This was God's plan to keep the Nephites close to him. As long as they served God and followed his laws, He protected them. Whenever they began to be a wicked and ungodly people, then they would be attacked and overrun by their enemies until they turned again to God, and called on Him.

Zeniff was one of the Nephite scouts who traveled far into the wilderness to spy and watch to decide which group of the Lamanite armies to attack. He was a strong man and a Godly man. When Zeniff saw things about the Lamanites that were good, he wanted his ruler to make a treaty with them. But his ruler was a blood thirsty man who then wanted to destroy Zeniff. A terrible battle began among the Nephite army and the greater number of them were destroyed. Zeniff returned to his people and told them what had happened.

But he still had the dream of a group of Nephites going back to the first land they had lived in, that they called the land of Lehi-Nephi. He



collected other interested people and started again for the land of Lehi-Nephi. This land was now under the control of the crafty Lamanite King, Laman. Zeniff and his people were so eager to live in this land that they decided to make an agreement, a treaty, with King Laman.

The King made a promise that they could possess the land of Lehi-Nephi, and the land of Shilom. He also forced his people to leave that part of the land. And the people of Zeniff began to build buildings, and to repair the walls of the city and to till the ground and plant all manner of seeds, and fruits. As they served God they began to have many children and prosper in the land.

But this was King Laman's plan. He was a cunning man. His people were a lazy and greedy people. He had given the land up with a plan to enslave the people of Zeniff once they had made things grow and prosper. He waited twelve years, and then sent in an army of Lamanites against the people south of Shilom to attack, and rob and slay them. The desperate people fled to the city of Nephi and did call upon Zeniff for protection.

Zeniff and his people turned to God and cried for protection and deliverance out of the hands of their enemies. They remembered how God had delivered His people so many times in the past. And God heard their prayers. And Zeniff did arm them with many weapons that were made. He gave his people bows and arrows, swords, curved swords called cimeters, clubs, and slings.

The people of Zeniff did go forth against the Lamanites and in one day and a night they did slay three thou-

sand and forty-three men of their enemies and they drove them out of their lands. And Zeniff writes that he did help bury the thousands of dead enemies. Can you imagine how hard that would be without all the digging tools and shovels that we have today?

Eleven more years passed. Zeniff had many more weapons made and set guards all around his land so that the Lamanites might not come upon them again unaware and destroy them. The people continued to work hard and created many beautiful things. The women were expert weavers and made linen and cloth of every kind while the men planted and grew all kinds of wonderful fruits and grains. They prayed and waited and worked.

News came that King Laman had died. His son began to stir up the Lamanites in hatred against the people

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WORD SEARCH

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Missionary
Benevolent
Association

Youth In Action 2003

The GMBA Youth in Action program is planning four tours for the summer of 2003. The locations and dates of each are as follows:

1. Inner City, Michigan – July 19-27. Inner City has a new building and a Youth In Action team will be helping make the neighborhood aware of the Church's presence there. This tour will begin right after the GMBA Campout in Michigan. We anticipate that many will participate in the kickoff weekend but we are targeting the official team size to be between 10 and 15.

2. Dominica, West Indies – July 25-August 4. Approximately 6-8 young people and a few adults will travel to the island nation of Dominica to organize and hold some special events to try to bring new people to this young mission. All participants for this tour must have a valid passport

and must be prepared to pay their own way for travel and lodging (approximately \$1000 per person).

3. Lorain, Ohio – August 9-17. The team assigned to Lorain (8-12 young people) will be called upon to uplift the saints in that area, reach out to some who don't attend any more and publicize the Church in the area. One of the outreach activities being considered is having a booth at a county fair.

4. Denver, Colorado – August 9-17. The group in Denver is growing and they expect to begin holding meetings soon in a rented church building. A team of 8-10 young people will be asked to canvass the surrounding area to call attention to the Church and be an uplift to the saints in this remote area.

As you can see, we have a lot of work planned for this summer and we will again rely on the participation of the young people of the Church to make it happen. We will need approximately 40 young people in total to staff the above four tours so I would encourage interested participants to

start signing up now. Where possible, please indicate both a first and second preference for location as this will give us some flexibility in making the tour assignments.

As a reminder, Youth In Action participants must be at least 15 years of age and first time participants must obtain a letter of recommendation from an Elder in their branch. There is a \$30 application fee which helps cover the administrative expenses of the YIA Committee. First time participants will receive a YIA t-shirt to be worn during the tour. Those who already have shirts from prior years should bring them along on their assigned tour.

Application forms are available from Brother David Lovalvo, YIA Secretary. Contact him at dlovalvo@aaahawk.com to obtain a form. Questions on the above tours can be addressed to me at abacommish@aol.com.

Please join us in praying for the 2003 Youth In Action tours.

God bless you,
Brother Jerry Valenti
Youth In Action Chairman



Branch and Mission News

Blessings Flow in Levittown, Pennsylvania

By Brother Jared Bright

On October 27, 2002, the Lord's blessings overflowed in our branch of Levittown, Pennsylvania. We started our day off with the blessing of Danielle Renee Benyola, daughter of Paul Jr. and Dawn Benyola. She was blessed by Brother Paul Benyola, her grandfather. Brother Paul spoke concerning how Christ had called for the children to come unto him that they might be blessed.

Following the blessing, visiting

Elder Brother Jim Sgro spoke, referencing John 3:16. Brother Jim Crudup, visiting from Freehold, New Jersey, followed him. Brother Jim spoke strongly, referencing the hymn, *Just For Me*, and how the Lord had shed his blood for us, and there was one drop for you and me.

We then proceeded with the ordination of Brother Jared Bright as a deacon. His uncle, Brother Chip Smith of Herndon, washed his feet and he was ordained by Brother Mark King. Later, Brother Jared testified that while he had attended the Atlantic Coast Area Campout in September, he felt that he was being called into this office, and he thanked God for the spiritual job that the Lord blessed him with. Brother Chip also testified that he too felt that Brother Jared was being called, and was thankful to be able to wash his nephew's feet.

The Lord's spirit continued to flow throughout the rest of the testimony meeting when our young Brother Jeremy Camden stood up and asked for his baptism. Brother Jeremy testified how he loved the Lord and needed Him in his life, and that the ball was in his hands and he wanted to do the right thing with it. We all rejoiced in his calling as our Brother Jeremy had been struggling with this for many months. Sister Candi Roth stood on her feet and expressed that she was excited that she would have company at the water's edge. She had asked for her baptism earlier in the week. She continued to testify about how grateful she is with the gift that her dear (also blind) friend Norma had left her when she passed on to her reward. Norma was a friend of the Church for

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Blessings Flow in Levittown

Continued from Page 7

many years and had witnessed to Candi. She too had asked for her baptism, but was too sick physically to be allowed out of the hospital. Though we lost a dear friend, we have now gained a new sister.

We all left with our cups overflowing and anticipating the baptisms of our new brother and sister the following week. We continue to thank God for His love and care.

News from Saline, Michigan

On October 6, 2002, we met in anticipation of a great blessing, with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Saline, Michigan Mission. Brother Dominic Thomas opened our meeting this day in prayer, asking the Lord to bless our Mission. He petitioned God to encircle us with His Spirit in the future, as He has done over the past 20 years.

Nearly every member of the mission had a speaking part, sharing the highlights of the founding of the mission through the present day activities of the mission. Spiritual experiences were related, including the miracles God performed in the process of establishing the Church in Saline. Three families, the Morle's, Buffa's, and Carlini's, had purchased 44 acres outside Saline for homesites, along with the hope of one day erecting a church building. Around this time, Sister Leona Buffa had been given a dream. This dream was related to us again during our program. In her dream, she saw a hickory tree which began spreading its branches. She saw herself picking the fruit of the tree, putting it in a basket, which she then brought home and set in a safe place. She then awoke from her dream.

The early group of members did various fundraisers to build the savings account for a new church building. In April 1982, the Saline Mission was ap-

proved by the General Church during the spiritual conference. The first official meeting of the Saline Mission was held on Easter Sunday 1982 at the York Township Hall. Brother Peter Buffa requested that township officials rent us the building. To the member's surprise and amazement, the officials did not charge us rent to use the building for church services! God is so good!

Brother Reno Bologna became the first presiding elder of Saline. To promote the Church and spread the Gospel, the Saline members held picnics, hayrides, corn roasts and even float entries in the Saline Christmas parades. The mission received two first place prizes and one second place prize for their religious floats. These prize monies were donated to the church building fund.

Brother Bill Buffa related the experience regarding the laying of the foundation cement for the church building. There had been a steady downpour of rain the night before; however, amazingly enough, the ground was only slightly muddy. As the work began, there was a concern that not enough cement had been ordered. Not only was there enough, but there was exactly one wheelbarrow left over; another testimony of God's providence. As the crew began finishing the floor, there were dark storm clouds closing in. Watching in astonishment, we saw the clouds abruptly stop, turn north and bypass the freshly poured concrete. This happened three times. Not one drop of rain fell on the new floor until later when the concrete had already set up. Every town surrounding the church site had heavy rain that night while our concrete remained dry. What an amazing God we serve!

There was an acknowledgment in song of the Saline saints who had passed on. We sang their favorite hymns in memory of each of them.

The desire is still alive, to carry on the work God started when the saints first stood in their cornfields outside Saline and envisioned what could be. May God continue to bless us as we strive to serve Him in this little corner of the vineyard.

Hollywood, Florida

By Sister Jan Humphrey

Dina Marie Palermo, wife of our recently baptized brother, Samuel V. Palermo III, rendered her obedience to the Lord on November 24, 2002. The baptism was performed at Oak Lake in Hollywood, Florida by Brother John Catone through the authority bestowed upon him by Jesus Christ. The ordinance of laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost was performed by Brother Silver Coppa. Sister Linda Conger from the Cape Coral Mission sang a very beautiful and appropriate song *No Greater Love Than This*. Our newly baptized Sister Dina was asked to give her testimony in which she said God had been working with her for some time. Although she had been baptized twice before in her life, she came to understand during the time she had been attending services at The Church of Jesus Christ, the importance of being baptized properly with the authority given to our Church.

Without this wonderful gift from God of the Holy Ghost, where would we be today? How would we sustain ourselves in this evil world of today where wrong is made to seem right? The Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ states that "we believe the Holy Ghost to be . . . the unseen power and glory which emanates from God and can, at His will, manifest itself in various forms (Matthew 3:16; Book of Mormon, 1st Nephi 11:11) . . . Pure and holy, just and good, omnipresent, full of light and knowledge, and a discernor of thoughts and intents of mankind." Jesus promised each and every one of us: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever . . . But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:16, 26).

Brother Joe Catone spoke about how Sister Dina had fulfilled the

scriptures that unless a man is born of the Spirit, he/she cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Brother John Catone stated, "Jesus causes a great change in a newly baptized person. Christ suffered humiliation, persecution, crucifixion and a most horrible death. He had said that the multitude would know when the Pentecost was coming. The evidence of God's Holy Spirit would come upon them. By the mercy of God, He took on flesh to show the love He has for each of us, and that is what we must not lose sight of. Paul said to the Colossians to walk through this life as a changed person, using His Comforter, through our actions.

"There will always be a battle between the flesh and the spirit, but the Holy Spirit helps us through it. Christ brought the truth that will set us free. In the world today, many think that truth is the majority rule, but we know the truth through Christ's teachings and the Holy Spirit. Unless you have been born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God. Praise be to God for another soul—Sister Dina Palermo has found the truth.

Lake Worth, Florida

By Sister Josie Jasmin

On December 2, 2002, Brother Joe Perri was our visiting elder and opened our service exclaiming the goodness of God. Brother Joe, just back from Africa, told us of the enthusiasm of the brothers and sisters there to hear the word of the Lord. The people of Africa are hungry for the word and are grasping onto the Gospel. Brother Joe told of some of the experiences that were had while visiting there with other brothers including our own Brother Gene Perri. The text used today was taken from "The Book of Mormon concerning the prosperity of the people when they served him fully. We were encouraged to be workers for the Gospel and to spread the good news to all people that we come in contact with.

Brother Gene then expressed himself and was extremely thankful to the Lord for his travel to Africa, and of how they survived some serious conditions while there. He gave all honor and glory to our Heavenly Father. As our brother spoke to us, the joy that he felt was passed on to the congregation. He stated that the Gospel is spreading throughout the land, and of how joyful and full of life the people were. They indeed are very grateful for the Gospel Restored.

On Sunday, December 8, Brother Mike Radd opened our service and read from Moroni Chapter 7, concerning the gifts. We need to give good gifts by keeping ourselves clean and

"Behold, the spirit of God is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which invited to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God" (Moroni 7:16).

good before God. Remembering always to pray with real intent, trusting God for all things. All good cometh from God! God sent His Love, His Son, to earth to redeem mankind from the sinful lusts of the world. Moroni speaking to the Church said "Behold, the spirit of God is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which invited to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God" (Moroni 7:16).

Brother Carl Romano followed on the same theme, the wonderful gifts of

God to each of us, emphasizing the gift of the Restoration, which He so freely gave to us. "He sent us His Love through the Restoration. We need to shine the light for all to see. We are His children, His saints on earth."

Brother Gene Perri followed exhorting us to read the word of God, and to be thankful for the gift of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "We need to serve God fully to prove to the world that there is only One Church, One God, and One Baptism. Never be ashamed of the Gospel! Stand up for the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Stand up for the Restoration! Stand tall and firm for what we have received!"

Testimony followed and there were many thankful hearts praising God for all His mercies towards us. Beautiful hymns of praise were raised up in thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for the Gift of His Love, His Son!

Sister Carmela Biro from New Brunswick, New Jersey has been visiting with us and has celebrated her 77th spiritual anniversary. We celebrate with our sister also for the many years of her devoted service in the Gospel being always ready to praise His name.

What a Mighty God We Serve

Sunday December 15, 2002

As we attempt to convey to the saints of God the glory of His work, we reflect upon the words of our wonderful Apostle, Brother V. James Lovalvo, "There are no words in the vocabulary of mortal man that can describe what you saw." Yes, the heavenly glories from God cannot be described. We try in our futile way to describe this mighty God we serve and His marvelous works displayed among us, the saints of the most high God.

Once again we stood at the water's edge, receiving warm greetings from the ducks and the geese as they prepared to share their abode

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What a Mighty God

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with us. They were positioning themselves to witness the great work of God that was about to be performed. Being surrounded by the glory of God, the saints watched them as they stepped down into the water one by one from the icy sidewalk that surrounded the waters edge and situated themselves to behold God's glory descend upon another soul.

A marvelous work and wonder indeed, a soul driven from the land of Kisii, Kenya Africa, to the blessed land of America to enter into the waters of regeneration, into God's Church, The Church of Jesus Christ, through obedience to His direction. There we stood at the water's edge surrounded by all the magnificence that God in His awesome manner presents unto us. Watching the excellency of this performance and capturing its glory, our souls cry out: "What a mighty God we serve. What a mighty God we serve, the angels bow down before Him, heaven and earth adore Him, What a mighty God we serve!"

Then, in the midst of this grand performance, we hear the astounding words of the ministry echoing with great power and authority, "Zipporah Onyancha, having authority given to me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Down into the watery grave, then instantly as the twinkling of the eye, the soul brought forth, a new creature in Christ Jesus. I would ask of you, do you have words in your vocabulary to describe such a performance? Further, just to think that God (indescribable) the magnificent Director extended unto man the authority to be the actors in this grand performance of building His kingdom here on earth! Brother Alphonso Hopkins was chosen to perform this baptism. What a mighty God we serve.

No wonder the ducks and geese react and take their place to watch this great and noble event. The sky, the trees, the warm radiance of the sun, the water, and the saints humbly respond to the magnificence of Almighty God and the glory of His

works. We stand speechless as the tears of glory trickle softly down the cheek. Thank you God for your presence and for another soul born into your kingdom.

Brother Mitchell Edwards was chosen to perform, confirming our sister into holiness.

To witness a baptism, a repentant soul, burning with God's love, nothing on this earth or in this earth can compose words to describe, "What a mighty God we serve!"

Note of Thanks

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation for your prayers on my behalf. I am a living witness to the fact that the prayers of the saints are not in vain. I want to thank and praise God as well, as He brought me through the fire and preserved my life.

I can certainly relate to the introductory words of that old literary classic, *The Tale of Two Cities*, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." As most of you know, I live near the capitol of the Navajo Nation and work in a public school district on the reservation. I knew this year was going to be a challenge when it began with my administrative assistant turning up missing in July (only a few days before I was supposed to leave for Muncey, Canada for the Conference of Native Americans), and to this day no one has seen or heard from her. A few months later another of my office assistants lost her son; he was murdered not far from where we live. My wife and I knew both of these women very well. It was shortly after that that I became ill and wound up in the hospital with a lung infection, which eventually was diagnosed as pneumonia. I remained in the hospital for 2 1/2 weeks.

I know that the Lord preserved my life as the doctors could not find an antibiotic that would stop my fevers and slow down the fluid build-up in my

lung cavity. One day Brother Ron Brutz and his family came to visit me in the hospital and he anointed me, pouring his heart out to the Lord on my behalf. I have not had a fever since that day, Praise God. I have never been in the hospital before, except when I was a young man in Europe, and I have never had to face such a serious challenge to my health. I cannot begin to tell you what a blessing it was to receive all of your e-mails, cards, phone calls and visits. I'm doing much better now as I am now back at work after being on sick leave for over three months. I thank God for The Church of Jesus Christ, and may God bless each and every one of you.

With Love in Christ,
Brother Larry Watson

Rest In Me

By Sister Patty Kerby

He holds me up when
I feel like falling,
He says be still
And calms my anxious heart.

He says don't fear,
I'm the one that holds tomorrow.
Just hold my hand
And trust me for today.

He fills my emptiness
With His love so glorious
And shows grace to me,
Though undeserved.

Trust in me my child,
My hands still hold the universe,
Your life is precious
And I'm in control.

Rest in my love,
Your life is exposed before me,
I see your need before
You ask.

I'm always there when
You seek forgiveness.
I am still your father
And you my child.

Notice

The Songs of Zion hard cover songbooks are now available at the Print House for the price of \$8.50 each, plus postage. To order call, write or e-mail:

The Church of Jesus Christ
Print House
8282 Boettner Rd.
Bridgewater, MI 48115
734-429-5080
CofJCPH@msn.com

News from the Meru and Kisii Tribes

Continued from Page 1

The three villages are Kakamega, Biringo, and Menyinkwa.

One of the strongest testimonies of the power of the Gospel is the repentance and conversion of those who had practiced witchcraft. We thank the Lord that He is the same today as in the days of the ancient apostles. (Remember Simon of Acts 8:9-13?) Let's also pray that the Lord will provide the funds to build the Church's first permanent structure in Kenya, a simple chapel that will be used as the headquarters building and as the new location for the vocational school that assists the children of the saints by teaching practical, vocational trade skills.

The Children's Corner

Continued from Page 6

of Zeniff. The spies that Zeniff had hiding in the wild country saw the great army of the Lamanites begin to gather; they were going to attack upon the north of the land of Shilom.

Zeniff's people were ready. They evacuated their cities. The women and children were sent by the hundreds to

hiding places in the wilderness. Can you imagine how you would feel if you were going without your father hiking into the mountains or jungles to be hidden from thousands of murderous enemies? There wouldn't be any stores, or baths, or warm water. Maybe they had a llama or vicuna to carry some things but the bigger children would have to help the smaller ones across rugged rocks to the hiding place where wild animals lived. Radios, telephones, airplanes were not invented so there would be no way of knowing if their dad, or your brother was dead or alive in the battle.

The old men and every young man that could carry a weapon were gathered together to go to battle. Zeniff also was in his old age. Zeniff writes that he placed them in their ranks, every man according to his age. He reminded them that they were fighting for their lives against an enemy who thought they deserved to die. All they knew was that they could pray and trust God and they did. Zeniff's army went out in the strength of the Lord.

The Lamanite army came upon them, armed this time with all the weapons like Zeniff's people had. They had their heads shaved and wore a leather girdle about their bodies. They were a wild, and fierce, bloodthirsty people. They must be fought face to face, man against man, and they outnumbered the people of Zeniff.

But God gave great strength to the army of Zeniff. They killed their attackers with a great slaughter, even so many that they could not count them. They drove them out of their land. The grateful people thanked God and were reunited with their families and children. Can you imagine the joy that you would feel to see your dad or brother or uncle walk in the door safe? The people of Zeniff returned to their land to live and plant crops. Their God had delivered them. He is the same God that we serve. When we follow His commandments he blesses us. When we pull away and are hard-hearted or boastful about all that we think we can do, then we are setting ourselves up for trouble.

Remember, we serve a jealous

God. He expects us to talk with Him and call upon Him. He is deserving of all our praise. Just as He delivered the children of Zeniff, He will deliver us when we call upon His name. He cares for us.

With love,
Sister Jan

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to those that mourn the loss of loved ones. May God bless and comfort you.

MARY (D'ANTONIO) ROSS

Sister Mary (D'Antonio) Ross of the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to her reward on December 13, 2002. She was preceeded in death by her husband, John; one daughter, and two sons, Alma and William and her brother Frank. She is survived by two brothers, Fred and Anthony; two sons, Anthony and John, Jr.; four daughters-in-law, Angie, Judith, Connie and Doris; 11 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

ROBERT SMITH

Brother Robert L. Smith of the Lorain, Ohio Branch passed on to his reward on December 31, 2002. He is survived by his wife, DeLoris; sons, Robert Jr., Ron and Dennis; brothers, Frank and John; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

FRANCES (CAMPO) CECE

Sister Frances (Campo) Cece of the Plumbrook, Michigan Branch passed on to her reward on December 3, 2002. She was preceded in death by her father, Brother Frank Campo; mother, Sister Rosa Campo; and her sisters, Mary and Annie Campo. She is survived by her husband, John Cece; daughters, Diane Laratta, Carolyn Cleland, and Shirene Clements.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sister Marisol Muljica was baptized on January 12, 2003 in the Edison, New Jersey Branch. She was baptized by Brother Johnathan Olexa, and confirmed by Brother Bob Pizzaia.

Brother Jeremy Leigh Camden was baptized on November 3, 2002 in the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Jerry Valenti and confirmed by Brother Mark King.

Sister Candi Roth was baptized on November 3, 2002 in the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Jerry Valenti and confirmed by Brother Sam Dell.

Brother Andrew James Tarbuk was baptized on December 22, 2002 in the Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Dan Buffington and confirmed by Brother Jim Moore.

Sister Sarah Marie Buffington was baptized on December 22, 2002 in the Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Jim Calabro and confirmed by Brother Bob Buffington.

Sister Angela Leah Yoder was baptized on December 22, 2002 in the Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Jim Calabro and confirmed by Brother Bob Buffington.

Sister Dina Marie Palermo was baptized on November 24th, 2002 in the Hollywood, Florida Branch. She was baptized by Brother John Catone and confirmed by Brother Silver Coppa.

Children Blessed

Anna Christina DiMelis, daughter of Brother Dino and Sister Chrisina DeMelis was blessed on September 15, 2002 at Detroit, Michigan Branch #2.

River Sofye John, daughter of Brook Antone and Gloria Marilyn John, was blessed on October 13, 2002 at the Muncey Mission in Ontario, Canada.

Skyler Domthi John, son of Shannon Knight and Gloria Marilyn John, was blessed on October 13, 2002 at the Muncey Mission in Ontario, Canada.

Amber Dawn Jannina Salter, daughter of Don Salter and Heather Nicholas was blessed on October 13, 2002 at the Muncey Mission in Ontario, Canada.

Nathan Edward Tonkonoh, son of Michael Edward and Cheryl Gail Snake, was blessed on October 28, 2002 at the Muncey Mission in Ontario, Canada.

Jaden Anthony Smith, son of Sister Joinne Faschilla and Darryl Smith, was blessed on November 24, 2002 in the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch.

Christopher Rocco D'Alimonte, son of Sister Jennifer and Frank D'Alimonte was blessed on June 30, 2002 at the Windsor, Ontario Branch.

Christopher Jerome Boyd, Jr., son of Tammy Boyd, was blessed on September 1, 2002 at the Windsor, Ontario Branch.

Jesse Peltier, son of Brother Mark and Sister Sophie Peltier, was blessed on November 1, 2002 at the Windsor, Ontario Branch.

Steven James Jordan, son of Sister Rachel and Jim Jordan was blessed on November 1, 2002 at the Windsor, Ontario Branch.

Address Change

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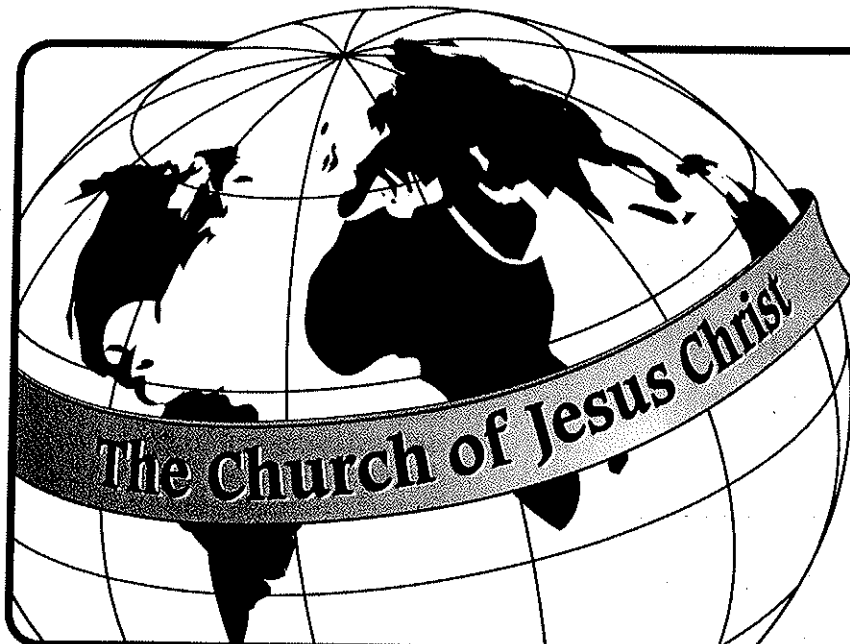
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The Gospel News

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April, 2003

Volume 59, No. 4

Missionary Visit to Nigeria, West Africa

By Evangelist J. Joseph Perri

Many years ago, when plans were being made for my first trip to Nigeria, Brother John Ross who at the time was in charge of the missionary work in Africa, told me, "Brother Joe you are going to fall in love with the African people, in particular those who have become your brothers and sisters in Christ. You will want to keep going back to visit." Those words spoken by this great Missionary Evangelist certainly were profound, because I have fallen in love with the African brothers and sisters, not only in Nigeria, but in Ghana and in Kenya also. They are a beautiful people and words are inadequate to describe the feeling experienced when you get to know them, to experience their love and appreciation for our visits.

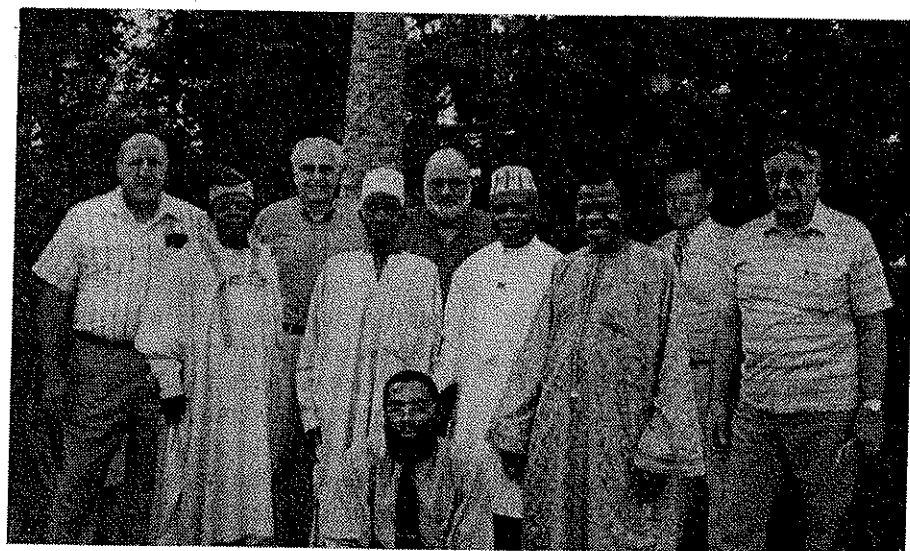
Several years passed since the last visit was made to Nigeria. The tragedy of 9/11 and the problems in that country caused us to postpone our trip in 2001. Correspondence was received from our Church Director Evangelist George Arthur on a number of occasions informing us of the desire the brothers and sisters had to see us and that they were praying God would prepare and open the way for our return visit.

After much prayer and planning the day arrived for five missionaries to begin the journey to visit the saints of The Church of Jesus Christ in Nigeria.

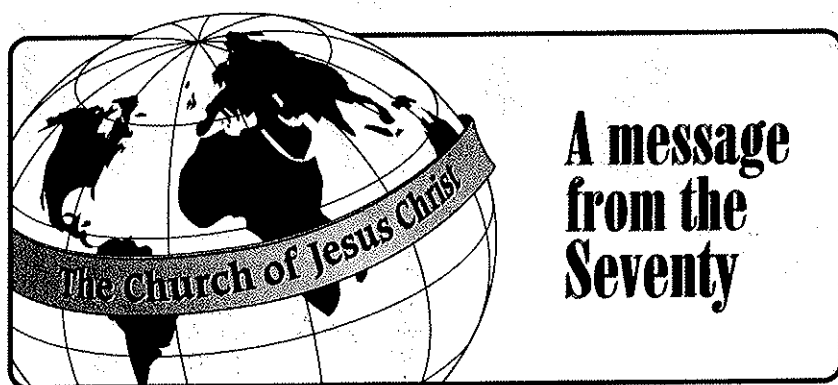
This visit to Nigeria, Africa would be the first for Apostle Paul Benyola, Evangelist Eugene Perri, and Elder Frank Natoli. Brother Lyle

Criscuolo was returning for the second time. Too many for me to count. Upon our arrival at the Port Harcourt Airport, a group of approximately 15 brothers along with Sister Agnes Arthur came to welcome us. We were so blessed to see and greet this large group of our beloved brothers and sisters that traveled 3 1/2 hours from their homes, over dangerous roads.

(Continued on Page 3)



Left to right: Evangelist Eugene Perri, Evangelist George Frank Arthur, Nigerian Church Director, Apostle Paul Benyola, Elder Robert Ekpo, Elder Lyle Criscuolo, Elder Joseph Arthur, Elder Joseph Usoro, Elder Frank Natoli, Evangelist J. Joseph Perri, and kneeling is elder Donald Item.



Missionaries Needed to Spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ

*By John Griffith, Quorum of Seventy Evangelists President
Eugene Perri, Quorum Vice President*

The Quorum of Seventy Evangelists has been authorized by the General Church Conference to create a pilot program, introducing a new concept of administration to handle the outpouring of God's love to His Creation throughout the World. Covering a ten-year period, over twenty new countries have now received the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our humble missionary endeavors. "All Praise be to God, our Father." We acknowledge all who have offered past missionary support and encourage all ages to become involved. Because of our growth expectation in the missionary fields, we are creating many new missionary teams to handle new areas. **WE NEED YOU.** Step up to receive the Lord's blessings. Contact any Evangelist for a registration form.

NIGERIA, WEST AFRICA NOVEMBER 2002 MISSIONARY TRIP

The land where Brother W. H. Cadman and Brother J. Bittinger were called upon in the year 1954 to introduce the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ to their people, the Church has been established there for nearly fifty years and many souls have rendered obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. There are only a few living original members in Nigeria today who remember the first

missionaries as they introduced The Church of Jesus Christ to them. Those few remaining speak with fondness as they recall the love of God that was taught as well as shown them from the very beginning. It is the love of God that has kept them faithful and enduring until this present time in the promise they made to serve God.

It is evident that missionaries from the United States are not forgotten who have come among them. The native citizens can recall our missionaries by name and mention how they taught to love God and each other. Since 1954, many brothers and sisters have gone among this wonderful people bringing the same message and example. God's love makes a life long indelible mark on all people wherever they reside.

During our most recent visit, our Evangelist Field Committee Chairman of the Church in Nigeria introduced the various Ministry who accompanied him on this trip to a congregation of some 2720 saints. They gathered from many different geographic locations, walking many, many miles to welcome the missionaries with a thunderous applause. As is their custom, every effort is made to show how happy the Nigerian Church membership is to have you visit with them.

Observed during the first Sunday

service at the Nigerian National Conference Center, after an Elder spoke or offered prayer, a loud "Amen" in praise to God would be heard from the saints. We had to admire the order and respect that was shown throughout the entire service which lasted close to six hours. How wonderful it is to see a people with such exuberance in their service to the Lord. A visit to The Church of Jesus Christ in Nigeria is one that can never be forgotten.

Go Tell It on the Mountains

On our most recent trip to Peru, Brother Daniel Mora and Brother Juan Mestas journeyed from Arequipa, Peru, which is at an elevation of 7,000 feet high into the mountains in the region of Puno, to the small village of Santa Rosa Melgar. Our brothers were the guests of Senor Nico Paz, who owns a ranch that has been in his family for generations. The altitude of the village is about 14,000 feet, well above the timberline. It is cold at night, even in the summer, with freezing temperatures.

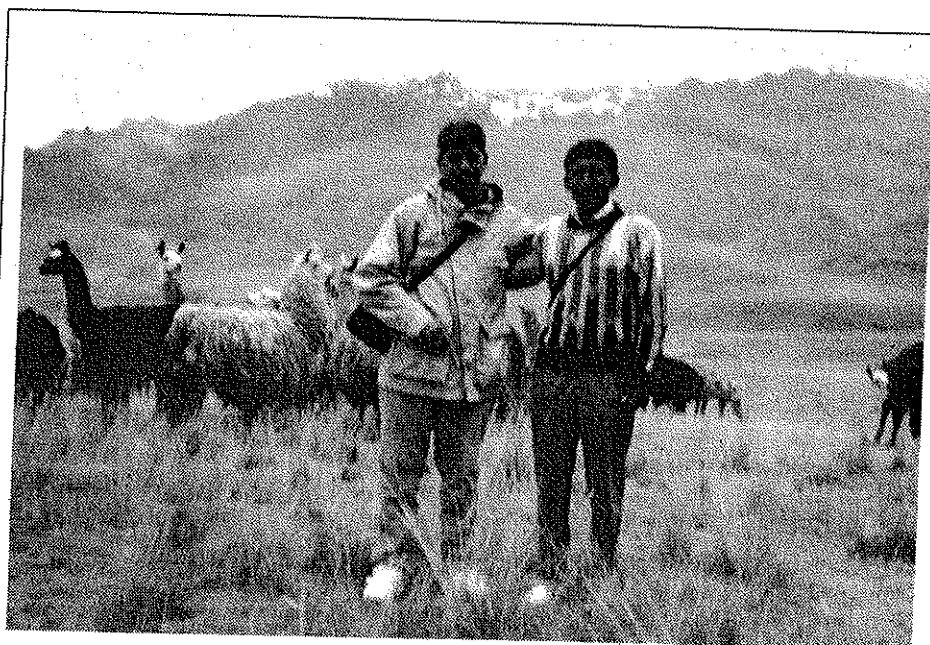
Brother Juan's parents were originally from Puno, but this was his first trip. The purpose was to continue to preach the Gospel which was originally introduced to the Puno area by Brother Dick Christman and Brother Miguel Bicelis, five years prior. Brother Daniel made a trip to that area with Brother Dick several years ago. He took the opportunity on this trip to renew acquaintances, and continue to preach the Gospel to a very poor and economically depressed community. Some of the children have no covering for their feet, and the weather can be damp and cold in the summer and cold and windy in the winter.

Brother Juan and Brother Daniel were well received. They met with various families and also held a meeting. The community has a small radio program and Brother Daniel introduced the Church on the local

program several years ago. The school principal, who in the past invited us to hold services at the school, greeted them warmly. She was thankful for the children's clothing and school supplies, which were made available through some kind donations.

The journey from Arequipa to this area is about six hours on the bus, but it is the most reliable mode of transportation. The airport has to cancel many flights to this area due to the fog, actually low clouds, at that altitude. We plan to return soon and continue to tell the good news of Jesus Christ. The highest purpose of the Church after all is to spread the Gospel and the scripture in Mosiah 15:18 states, "...O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people."

While Brother Daniel and Brother Juan were preaching the



Brother Daniel Mora (right) and Brother Juan Mestas

Gospel in the highlands, Brother Dick and Sister Pat Christman were visiting saints and making new connections in Arequipa. We were pleased to receive the Church incorporation papers, as it

was a long process; but God was in the matter and prepared the way.

The saints in Peru greet all in the love of God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Missionary Visit to Nigeria

Continued from Page 1

They made us feel welcomed immediately.

A miracle of God's protecting hand was made visible to us within a short driving distance from the airport to our Mission House. Our driver was cautioned several times to slow down because of driving too fast. He would reduce the speed when asked, only to increase it very quickly. We were following the van carrying a group of brothers and our luggage. To avoid potholes and a rough portion of the road, the driver of the van we were following slowed down, and pulled to the right side of the road. Our driver was driving fast and too close, and when he applied the brakes, our vehicle could not stop, but began to slide.

At the same time, there was an 18-wheeler coming directly towards us. To avoid a direct hit in the rear of the van we were following or having

a head-on collision, our right front fender struck the left rear fender of the van in front of us, thus shifting us towards the left and the oncoming truck. Viewing the distance between the van and the oncoming truck, there was no possible way for our station wagon to fit between the van and truck without being involved in a head-on collision with the truck or hitting the van directly in the rear, which either would have caused serious injury or even death. The truck was traveling at a high rate of speed and none of us would have survived if we had a head-on collision. God made the impossible, possible because our vehicle fit between the truck and van avoiding certain disaster. After this incident, our brothers remarked one to the other that we were not afraid, for we knew God was watching and protecting us from serious injury or even death. Brother George Arthur, when he saw the danger we were facing, called out to the Lord Jesus Christ for help.

Arriving at our mission house several hours later, we formed a circle, held hands and Brother George offered a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving for our safe arrival and asked God to bless us during our visit, that He would care for and bless our wives and loved ones we left at home. The near tragedy turned out to be the beginning of a glorious visit. Another group of brothers and the Mbiabong Ikot Udofia Choir were waiting to greet us upon our arrival at the home of Brother Arthur. After a lengthy welcome presentation and singing by the choir, we were treated to a chicken and rice dinner that was prepared for us by Sister Agnes Arthur and her daughters. A Very tasty meal to quench our hunger.

The National Priesthood postponed their business conference in order for us to present our prepared seminars. The Elders, Teachers, Deacons, and Deaconesses as-

(Continued on Page 4)

Missionary Visit to Nigeria

Continued from Page 3

sembled, were divided into five groups. Seminar subjects were, "Our Calling" by Brother Paul Benyola, "The Book of Mormon" by Brother Eugene Perri, "Apostasy and Restoration" by Brother Frank Nätoli, "Faith & Doctrine" by Brother Lyle Criscuolo, "Accountability" by Brother Joe Perri. There was very good participation in every class. We conducted seminars for approximately five hours to a very attentive group of brothers and sisters, anxious to learn. A beautiful spirit was enjoyed in each seminar class and time well spent.

The attendance at our Conference Sunday worship service was 2,720 and for the first time in the Nigerian Church history, communion was served at a Conference Sunday worship service and to a very large crowd. Each brother and sister took of the bread and wine very reverently, bowing his or her head and offering a prayer of thanksgiving. There was absolute quiet for a large gathering of saints, where you could have heard a pin drop. What a beautiful spirit and a glorious sight to witness. The faith and reverence our Nigerian brothers and sisters possess in Jesus Christ who gave them hope for salvation through his death and resurrection is truly genuine.

I would like to share several experiences that show God's miraculous healing power. A sister from the Obio Ndot Branch of the Church in the Abak District, who was very ill some 23 years ago, at the request of her family, went to see a doctor who gave her no encouraging news. He told her to return home and spend what few days she had left with her family. Instead of going directly home, she went to the little church building made of mud and a thatched roof where she had been attending worship services. It was there she began her period of fasting and praying. For 21 days she remained in the building with her faith in God that he would heal her. She miraculously survived her illness and her family and branch were greatly blessed.

After five years had passed, another visit was made to this particular branch, and the same experience was related and the question was asked whether the sister was still present. She quickly stood and said God had given her five more years of life. While in attendance in this same branch during our recent visit in November some 23 years later, I was inspired to relate the same experience again, and the question was asked whether the sister was still present in the meeting that afternoon? The Presiding Elder without hesitation said she was still alive and well, and she was requested to stand. She stood and we beheld a sister small in stature, but a giant in the service of God in this branch. She is a great worker for the Church in her branch as an ordained



A Deaconess of the Obio Ndot Branch of the Church in the Abak District.

Deaconess. Praise God for He is no respecter of persons but will show his power with those that exercise faith in him. What a glorious testimony this sister and branch membership has of God's miraculous healing power.

Brother Edom Ebong an Evangelist (now deceased) of the Church related to us an experience some years ago that in the village where his wife came from there were three children who were born crippled and unable to walk. He told us of the events as they happened, but it was during this visit that we were able to understand the magnitude of what truly happened. For the first time, we met a young brother named Timothy, who was one

of the three children born crippled. Brother Timothy relayed to us the events as they happened that one child died, one bore a child although she is crippled, but than he said to us "And the other one was me." Timothy was the other child born crippled. He said by prayer and the mercy of God he was made completely whole. No signs were seen of his ever being crippled and unable to walk. Brother Timothy is a very bright, energetic active member of the Church and is the MBA President of his district.

We attended a crusade held in Nigeria for the first time. One evening, 437 were in attendance. At the conclusion of Saturday evening's crusade, 317 people came forward requesting more information about the Church. A number requested prayer because of illness. To ensure there would be no disturbance of any kind, the local police were present. They felt our love and were touched by the spirit of God and requested that a special prayer be offered for each of them. They each requested a Bible and a Book of Mormon which we gladly gave to them. For Sunday worship service, there were 110 in attendance who came to hear the Gospel message. At the completion of our preaching service an invitation was extended to those who were touched by the spirit of God who had a repentant heart and desired baptism. Eight souls stood up and each bore testimony that they were touched by what was preached and wanted to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ. A young man stated he would donate land for a church building.

During our visit, we met with the National Ladies' Circle who related to us their activities and made some requests. They are a very active group of sisters, led by Sister Agnes Arthur as President. After our Conference Sunday worship service was concluded, a youth group of MBA members put on a skit and sang for us. The youth of the Nigerian Church have dedicated themselves as missionaries to go to as many villages as possible, and when the opportunity presents itself they want to go to other states to

(Continued on Page 11)



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

Did you ever break up a fight or mediate in an argument? If you did, then you know that in order to be successful, you must be sensitive to both sides of the issue. If you take sides, you create even more contention and end up joining in on the fight. The children of God, according to Jesus, are those who are peacemakers. We, being the children of God, can only claim that title if we truly are peacemakers. In God's Word, there are numerous examples of this. When others were performing miracles in the name of Jesus, John wanted them to be condemned. But Jesus, being a peacemaker, told His disciples to leave them alone. If they weren't against Jesus, they were for Him. The adulterous woman would have been stoned to death by the people for the sins she had committed. But Jesus mediated on her behalf, and caused the people to see her side of the story. He told the people that if they were without sin, that they should cast the first stone. The people were confounded, and had to end their planned attack of the woman.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

Peace can only come when there is forgiveness. If a person can forgive another, then contention is stopped in its tracks. This is just like Jesus who forgives all our sins. He said that if He can forgive all our sins, even if they are red like crimson, then we ought to forgive one another. Forgiving is the only thing that can end contention. When we end contention, the devil cannot work.

"For verily, verily I say unto you, he that has the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirrith up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another" (3rd Nephi 11:29).

The devil causes us to only see our side of the story, and not consider the feelings of others. This feeling breeds contention. Did you ever meet someone who always felt he/she was right about everything? This is a person who is driven by the spirit of contention, which is of the devil. The Bible says that the wisdom of mankind is foolishness to God. So how can a person always think he/she is right about everything? But the true children of God are those who are humble peacemakers. They don't always have to prove their point, or think they are always right. They can empathize and sympathize with another person, forgive them, and love them, regardless of what they've done. I think sometimes as saints of God, we are too quick to become offended. We must realize that being able to understand another person, and forgive them (thus eradicating any possible contention) is a conscious decision on our part. It doesn't come naturally. Human sin nature tells us to become offended and contend with one another, rather than be a peacemaker. But as saints of God, we have to work at suppressing those feelings and truly be the peacemaker that God wants us to be.

Sometimes God must humble us down in order to be a peacemaker. He does this by causing us, or someone in our family, to go through something that we have been criticizing others for. An example is people who don't have children condemning other parents who seem to have unruly children. Then one day, they have children of their own, who become unruly. Suddenly, they can understand and empathize. Another example is those who condemn others who are going through a divorce. Then the day comes when they go through it, or someone in their family does. Suddenly, they understand and empathize. There are numerous other examples.

Brothers, sisters and friends, let's avoid having to be taught this kind of lesson, simply by being the peacemaker Jesus wants us to be. Let us understand, forgive and love one another. No one really ever "wins" an argument or a fight. In the end, the only "winners" are the true children of God...the peacemakers.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork



King Zeniff Chooses the Wrong Son

(MOSIAH 13-17)

King Zeniff had been a strong, brave, godly leader. Ever since he had led a group of Nephites from Zarahemla back to the land of Lehi-Nephi, he had worked with his own hands for a living and fought the Lamanites for his life and the lives of his people. He had made an agreement with King Laman to live in peace while they farmed and lived on the land. But it was a trick; the fierce Lamanites waited until the Nephites had done all the work, then they began attacking them for their riches, their crops, their silver, gold and flocks.

Zeniff taught his people to pray constantly and ask God to save them. In two terrible battles, his people were outnumbered but God gave them great power to fight. The Book of Mormon says they fought in "the strength of the Lord". They did not brag later; they buried thousands of their enemies and kept thanking God for hearing their prayers.

Zeniff grew old. His people had prospered in this rich land. They worked with their hands and created beautiful things from gold, silver, clay and fabrics while they enjoyed peace. Now they needed a younger king. Zeniff had more than one son, but he picked his son, Noah, to be the next king. Noah was the wrong choice. Right away, Noah began perverting the good laws of God and the kingdom. He wanted more than one wife and had more than one woman. When the priests (elders) of the

church criticized him, he had them replaced with new men who were as evil as he was. He planted vineyards and turned many of his people into drunkards.

Noah was greedy and lazy. He and his chosen army forced the people to pay 1/5th of all they had as a tax so that he and his friends did not have to work. He built beautiful palaces and buildings with the tax money. He had a row of seats covered with gold for his priests to sit at and lean on to make lying sermons, tricking others to think it was all right for them to sin as well. This next generation of people had forgotten how to serve God.

Small bands of Lamanite warriors began attacking, murdering, and robbing Nephite people on the edge of the country. King Noah did not send a big enough army to protect them. The enemy warriors returned. And then, a larger group of soldiers attacked Noah's people. Noah sent an army against them and they won. They were full of happiness and started to brag about how great they were. God was displeased. He sent a preacher named Abinadi to wake the people up. Abinadi warned them to thank God and return to their Godly ways or they would be outnumbered and destroyed by the Lamanite hordes surrounding them. He told them about God's plans and the birth of Jesus, our Savior.

Noah and the priests were furious. Abinadi boldly said how evil, sinful, lazy and full of lies they were. They wanted to kill him. But God sent him away. For two years Abinadi did not return. God was giving the people time to repent. Nothing changed. God sent Abinadi back again. Fearlessly he preached and

warned the people, "You are committing many sins. If you do not repent, you will be destroyed. You will burn in hell for the sins you are doing and teaching these people. You are not following the laws God gave Moses or telling them about God's Son, a Savior, who will be born, will die and resurrect." He boldly preached many beautiful words. The priests threatened to kill him and Abinadi answered, "I am not afraid to die. If I do, it will be a witness against you at the day of judgment."

At that point, Noah wanted to let him go, but the priests talked him out of it. They made a plan to burn Abinadi with fire. He was still unafraid and prophesied, "The Lamanites will overpower you. They'll make you carry their burdens like you are an animal. This whole generation will die unless they repent." He was not afraid. As he prophesied, "Whatever you do to

(Continued on Page 11)

WORD SEARCH

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Our Women Today

Rejoicing in the Inner City

By Sister Kathy Champine
Inner City Ladies' Circle Editor

"When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest" (Leviticus 23:10).

On November 23rd, 2002 the Detroit Inner City Ladies' Circle hosted our very first gathering in the beautiful new Inner City church building. The theme was Harvest Homecoming. We welcomed our sisters and friends from the Area to join us for a luncheon and refreshments and a time of reminiscing about the history of the Inner City Branch. We were thrilled and blessed beyond words as the Circle sisters from our Area supported our endeavor to welcome them into our new building. We received many beautiful gifts to fill our new kitchen and truly enjoyed ourselves as we spent time in fellowship. We thank God for his blessings and look forward to establishing ourselves as a contributing support to our Area Ladies' Circle.

Fellowship by the Sea

The Atlantic Coast Area Ladies' Uplift Circle held a retreat in Ocean Park, Maine on the weekend of June 7-9, 2002. The event, hosted by the sisters of the Maine Branch, was truly a chance to make new friends and renew old friendships. Friday evening we enjoyed fellowship by the campfire, roasting hot dogs and toasting marshmallows.

Our Area Ladies' Circle President, Sister Lydia Link, led our morn-

ing chapel service. Sis. Geneva Dell offered an opening prayer and we were ready to embark upon our day of seminars based on the theme, "Getting Ready to Take the Journey." It was emphasized that we need to prepare and set our priorities in order to utilize the gifts, talents and blessings received from the Lord. Preparing helps us to set our goals for running the great race to which we are called. We were encouraged to focus our thoughts on the Lord and to show His love by supporting each other and others in times of need.

One of our seminar leaders, Sister Anna Reid related an experience she had in preparing for the seminar. She petitioned the Lord in prayer and received the following dream "I saw myself running through a long dark tunnel. I could discern the presence of the evil one very close behind. As I was running, I began to feel tired. I called out to the Lord, please help me. The Lord immediately answered my prayer! I began to run faster. I felt the evil one was still behind me but afar off. I continued running, not looking to the left or to the right. Again I became tired, I called out to the Lord. Immediately, I was strengthened and began to run faster. Looking straight ahead I saw a small bright light at the end of the tunnel, and I awakened." She continued, "The beautiful gift box our sisters from Maine gave us contains a bookmark with an inscription that reads, 'I will be your light in the wilderness, and prepare the way before you, if ye shall keep my commandments' (Nephi 17:13). This confirmed my experience. I was truly uplifted, and I praise God for this blessing."

Several of the sisters were prompted by the spirit of God to share special blessings received during trying times in their lives. Our seminars ended with a feeling of inspiration and pleasure.

The afternoon included inspired words from our guest speakers, Sisters Irene Williams and Arline Whitton. Sister Irene spoke on the necessity of prayer, and explained that prayer is the

fingerprint of God in our lives. She related several moving experiences of answered prayer in her life.

Sister Arline's address encouraged us to have a one-on-one relationship with God and to trust and love Him with all our heart. She, too, stressed the role of prayer and the importance of keeping our priorities straight.

Our Maine sisters prepared a wonderful banquet for Saturday evening, after which they presented a spiritual program entitled, "We are the Children of Light, the Children of God." We concluded this blessed day with testimonies given by both the youth and adults.

The Sunday morning meeting began with a vision given to Sister Marie Perillo. The sacrament table was set as the hymn, *In the Garden*, was solemnly played. The peace of God was felt in our midst. After the table was set, Sister Marie saw a personage dressed in white sitting alongside of the table.

Evangelist Jerry Valenti spoke on the value that is added to our lives by being servants of the Lord. When we have self-discipline, attend meetings, fast and pray and work for the Lord, we become assets to the Church, each other, and a light to the world.

Apostle Paul Benyola followed, exhorting us to follow the teachings of God, and not allow the distractions of life to take away from our service to Him. He encouraged us to continue to be assets to the Church. "Your efforts will help the Church to grow, both at home and abroad."

Brother Jim Sgro, Atlantic Coast Region President, further encouraged us to continue to work for the Lord. He offered total support to the Ladies' Circle and asked the Lord to place a blessing upon us that whatever we do for the Lord would be an example to each other and to others.

Brother Richard Onorato offered the closing prayer. We ended our weekend on a higher spiritual ground. The blessings felt and the love that we shared will be remembered for a long time.



Branch and Mission News

Whom Do You Follow?

By Sister Karen L. Progar

I have never before thought to write an article on a funeral, but as I pondered the events in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch in the past year, I noted there has been a great loss in the branch due to the passing of many of our members and some who attended regularly contributing to the dynamics of the branch. The one thing that those who passed have in common is that they were steady and consistent in their service.

In December of 2002, Sister Mary Ross passed away at the age of 92. Sis. Mary was baptized in 1928 and showed that steady determination to endure to the end. She once shared with me an experience she had just two weeks after her baptism, which lifts my spirits every time I think about it. She was working in her kitchen when there was a knock at the door. When she opened the door, there was a man there with a clipboard in his hand. He asked her what church she attended and told her that he was canvassing the neighborhood to ascertain where all the people attended church. When she told him that she had recently been baptized in The Church of Jesus Christ, he showed her the clipboard and she noticed that the sheet on which he was writing was divided into blocks. In each block, he had written the names of the various churches in Aliquippa. He pointed to the middle square, which was blank and told her that he was going to write the name of her church in that block. As she gazed at the block, it became whiter than all of the others, almost glowing. She knew he was a messenger of God and noted that she actually didn't see where he went as he departed her home; it was as if he disappeared. Sister Mary accomplished many things in her life, being a wonderful example of hospitality.

Numerous brothers and sisters stayed at her home and she even had the opportunity to spend six months in Africa on missionary work with her beloved husband, Brother John. Space is insufficient to make note of all her activities, but it is sufficient to say that she served God to the best of her ability all the many days of her life. It is truly a blessing that even this experience which took place over 70 years ago still stirs our hearts today.

A short while ago, we lost a member of our ministry, Bro. Chuck Jumper. I was amazed by the number of people who attended our brother's funeral, many who were visiting The Church of Jesus Christ for the first time. They heard a touching recap of Brother Chuck's life and his resolve to remain faithful to God until the end of his days. At the conclusion of Brother Chuck's eulogy, Apostle Paul Palmieri presented a moving sermon, the topic of which was, "Whom do you follow?" Bro. Paul used, for his scripture, II Kings 2:1-13, and addressed the congregation regarding the importance of whom we follow. He retold the story of Elisha's desire for a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Even when Elijah told him to wait while he went to the various destinations to which the Lord had sent him, Elisha refused to remain behind. Elisha's response was always the same, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." Brother Paul likened this to how we must be. Regardless of the situations we face or the destination to which we must go, we must follow the Lord, just as Brother Chuck had done. Elisha's reward was that double portion of Elijah's spirit; ours is a home in heaven with Jesus forever. I therefore ask again, "Whom do you follow?" Brother Paul encouraged us to make the person we follow our Lord, Jesus Christ so that He will one day welcome us into His rest because we were good and faithful servants.

The Lord placed it upon the heart of our Brother John D'Antonio to open our worship service the following Sunday with a call to those who haven't made their commitment to the Lord as yet. Brother John's text was in Mark 5:25-34. Using the example

of the woman with the issue of blood as his scriptural base, Brother John began by asking us when we give up with Christ. He used this woman and her 12 year battle with this affliction as an example of persistence and faith. The woman's faith was sufficient. She knew that if she touched the Lord's garments that there would be a healing upon her body. The Lord also was aware of her faith and knew that virtue had been drawn out of Him. His followers were amazed that the Lord would ask who touched Him when he was being thronged by a crowd. This confirms that the Lord is always aware of our needs and our desires, rewarding our faith as He sees fit. The woman allowed Christ to pass by her, but she made sure that she touched Him and received that which she sought. Brother John admonished us, "It is alright to allow Christ to pass by, but never allow Him to be beyond your reach." Brother John encouraged us to be resilient in our service and search for Christ.

May God afford us all the opportunity to be examples to others by the way that we serve.

A New Name Is Written Down in Glory and It's Kevin Alan Murphy

By Sister Bethany Smith

On December 22, 2002, the Tampa, Florida Branch received the answer to its prayers. Kevin Murphy, a man who has been attending our branch for a little less than a year, stood and gave his testimony. He said that the Lord had shown His power unto him many times throughout the past year, and on the previous Sunday, December 14 (when the Southeast Area MBA was visiting Tampa), while Brother Duane Lowe was being anointed Kevin prayed to the Lord that He would heal Brother Duane the same way He healed Kevin's son, Chris.

For further explanation...Kevin's seven-year-old son Chris was diag-

nosed with Epilepsy and he was suffering from several seizures a day. Kevin, who was heavy laden with this, asked the brothers and sisters to pray for Chris. Over the summer Elder Phil Benyola Sr. and Evangelist John DiBattista both anointed Chris and the seizures ceased. In November Chris went to the doctor's for a checkup and the results from the EEG, which is a test that monitors a person's brain waves, showed that there was no sign that Chris was ever afflicted.

Kevin was asking God for the same miracle in Brother Duane's case. Well after finishing his prayer and throughout the rest of the week Kevin, who had been praying about his calling from God, felt that the Lord was answering his bold request by commanding that he should "Step Up!" So praise God, Kevin Alan Murphy answered the call to baptism in the conclusion of his testimony!

Once Kevin sat down, Sister Annabelle Santilli, a deaconess from the Liberty, Ohio Branch, who spends the winters in Tampa with her husband Evangelist Richard Santilli, stood and spoke in the spirit saying, "I have called you, saith the Lord!" What a beautiful confirmation!

Hence on December 29, the Tampa Branch and several visitors from the Forest Hills Branch met at the waters of baptism a little after 10 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. Tampa Bay was having record low temperatures. Brother Isaac J. Smith took Kevin down into the watery grave and baptized him with the authority given him by Jesus Christ.

Following the preaching service, Brother Kevin was called up front for the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, the baptism of fire. After the priesthood knelt in prayer and Brother Evangelist Richard Santilli offered prayer asking God to send down His power and direction, Brother Elder Duane Lowe prayed on Brother Kevin bestowing upon him the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost to lead, guide and direct Kevin throughout his days.

Then Brother Kevin was asked to open the meeting in testimony. He shared how one Wednesday night,

after the doctors had diagnosed him with shingles and told him he would suffer from this pain on his side for several months, he came to church and there were no elders present that night. After encouragement from other brothers and sisters, Brother Kevin called our Presiding Elder, Brother Isaac J. Smith, who was in Dresden, Ohio at the time due to work and home on Wednesday night because the closest mission, Columbus, meets on Friday nights instead of Wednesdays. Brother Ike prayed over the phone while the present brothers and sisters knelt and prayed that God would heal Kevin. Kevin shared how during that prayer he felt a burning go up his side and God healed him and he has had no pain since.

Before Brother Kevin could continue with his testimony, Sister Annabelle Santilli stood and spoke in the spirit "That was *My* power, saith the Lord!" Another pronouncement of God's Presence!

Lake Worth, Florida

By Sister Josie Jasmin

On Sunday January 19th, Brother Carl Romano opened our service and read from John Chapter 13. Brother Carl stated the fact that all things are to be done according to Jesus' way. Man has always tried to change things, but the doctrine of Christ cannot and should not be changed. We can't alter what already is perfect. We must keep our eyes on the Lord always, and to willingly do all that He commanded for us to do. We will be tried many times over in this life, but we must become rooted and grounded in the Lord and His Gospel. We must give our all to Him in love and willingness of heart. The pure love of God must be within us and to each other.

There is no love like God's Love! And as the author penned the beautiful words, "God's Love, goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell, Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parchment

made, To write the Love of God above, would drain the ocean dry." God's love can touch each and every one if we only would open our hearts unto Him. God's love is beyond our understanding, but we know that it is sure forever and ever.

Brother Gene Perri followed and reminded us that God sent His Son to redeem us from sin and to make us whole through His love. "It took a miracle of Love and Grace." We will have peace in our lives, and that is a miracle. We need to be grateful for all that Jesus does for us, and to humble ourselves, esteeming our brothers and sisters more highly than ourselves. Jesus laid down His life for us. Oh what love! When Jesus comes into our hearts we are filled with His love and grace. God continues to bless us with miracles daily.

There has been a miracle here in Lake Worth recently. Kim and Bill's baby, Jack William, was born and the baby was in distress; he was having trouble with his heart and would not eat. Then he was offered up in prayer to our heavenly Father, and praise God, little Jack was healed.

We have been blessed with our winter members visiting with us recently. They include Brother John and Sister Bessie Impastato and Sister Patti Pianko from Michigan, and Brother Ernie and Sister Helen Alessio and Sister Helen's daughter Genie from Ohio. It does our hearts so much good to have our brothers and sisters come and spend precious time with us in fellowship.

Sunday, February 2, we were blessed with two ordinations in our branch. Brother Gene opened with scripture reading from the Bible and Book of Mormon. He read short passages from Romans, Acts, Mosiah and the Book of Ezra, pertaining to the offices of deaconess and teacher. He also read the duties of a deaconess and duties of a teacher from the Law and Order of the Church. Brother Kevin Jasmin was called to be a teacher and Brother Carmen Difede washed his feet. He was ordained by Brother Gene Perri. Sister Josie

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Lake Worth, FL

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Jasmin was called to be a deaconess, and Sister Dianne Maddox washed her feet. She was ordained by Brother Mike Radd. After the ordinations, Brother Mike Radd made reference to the prophet Ezra and of the work he did among the people. He was commissioned to have services again for the people, and taught them the ways of the Lord. Brother Mike also stated how he this very morning read from the book of Ezra and was in unity of mind with Brother Gene who also read from Ezra this morning. Brother Mike exhorted unto us to read and search the scriptures for there are beautiful golden nuggets to be found within the word of God.

Brother Carl Romano followed and spoke of how the ordained officers are servants used of God to assist the Church. We are the family of God and we need to support the family. We all need to be good workers for the Lord, to do His will and obey His commandments. Every member is a part of this family, the family of God!

Beautiful testimonies of praise were given by the brothers and sisters thanking the dear Lord for His love to us. It is such a joy to stand and give praises to our Heavenly Father who so generously gives to us more than we need. A beautiful spirit prevailed throughout the day.

At the close of the services a covered dish was served and enjoyed by all.

Blessings in the New Year*By Sister Regina Alverson*

On January 19, 2003, an extremely cold Sunday morning, the saints of Spartanburg, South Carolina gathered at the waters of regeneration to witness the birth of a new soul into the family of God. Gwen Sims Fasion was taken into the water by Brother Harold Littlejohn. Although the thermometer read just 30 degrees, our hearts and souls were warmed with

the love of God we felt as we witnessed our new sister emerge from the waters as a brand new babe in Christ! Later at the church building, Sister Gwen was confirmed by Brother Darrell Rossi. During the confirmation prayer, Sister Shirley Gray testified she heard a voice speak three times saying, "This is My Church, these are My people!"

Sister Gwen first came into contact with the Church through Sister Connie Smith. Sister Connie was a counselor at Tyger River Correctional Facility. Sister Gwen had set up a ministry in the prison to help the inmates overcome addictions to drugs and alcohol, the very same addictions God had delivered her from nine years ago. However, after meeting Sister Connie, Gwen began to realize that instead of her ministering, she was being ministered to by Sister Connie. She began to visit our mission here in Spartanburg, and South Bend, Indiana. She even attended the General Conference in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Gwen said that every time she talked with Sister Connie or visited the Church, God would reveal more and more to her and answer many of her prayers. Finally she made known her desire to be baptized. She chose the date of January 19, 2003, and she testified that she was hoping the weather would be warm that day. The Thursday before Sister Gwen's baptism we had a snowstorm and below freezing temperatures, with the wind chill factor in the single digits. Sister Gwen said she thought about calling Brother Harold and postponing until better weather, but she changed her mind, saying she knew this was a test and that if she postponed, something would keep coming up. She knew that God would take care of her, and truly He did. Neither Sister Gwen, nor Brother Harold got sick from going into the frigid waters. What a wonderful testimony for our new sister and her husband who came to witness his wife's baptism. Sister Gwen said that this was her sixth baptism, but this one was the right one! Praise God! We thank Him for starting our new year off with such a great blessing, and we look forward to many more!

Fort Pierce, Florida

February, 2003 is off to a beautiful start in Fort Pierce. Our branch was blessed this day by the testimony of Sister Donna Miller that she had been healed of cancer. Only a few weeks ago, she was in the hospital and not expected to live.

On Sunday, February 2, 2003, the Fort Pierce Branch witnessed the ordinations of Brother Mark Rogolino into the office of Teacher and Brother Clint Cason into the office of Deacon. Brother John D'Orazio welcomed all those who attended including two local first-time visitors and several brothers and sisters and friends from the Miami-Dade Mission and Lake Worth Branch. Brother John spoke about the calling of a Teacher and a Deacon and the weight of responsibility on each. A beautiful peace was felt throughout the congregation as the ordinations began. This was attested to later in the meeting by the experiences had during the ordination. Brother David Checchi washed Brother Mark's feet before he was ordained into the office of Teacher by Brother Rocco Benyola. Brother Jimmy Griffith washed Brother Clint's feet and he was then ordained by Brother Miguel Bicelis into the office of deacon.

Brother Frank Rogolino spoke about the children of the saints coming home and what a wonderful day that will be. Don't underestimate the power of God because He can do anything. Brother Frank witnessed this by his son, Mark, returning to the fold after many years battling addictions.

Brother Miguel Bicelis spoke using Ephesians and instructed the congregation to put aside all earthly pleasures and depend on God. The theme of our lives should be one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. He elaborated on the beautiful order set up by God for the edification of the Church. We must respect and follow the order of the spiritual organization of the Church as set up by Christ so we can learn how to walk by His example. Brother Miguel reminded us of the divine commission of the Gentiles to spread the Gospel to every nation.

Before opening the meeting to testimony, Brother John spoke on how the prodigal son's father and mother must have felt at seeing their son come home. "My son was dead, but now he lives...." Brother Mark and Brother Clint had the opportunity to bear their testimony and each described God's workings in their lives prior to their ordination. We know that God will continue to bless them and guide them in their new offices.

begun its operation and is providing employment for some of our Church membership. It was a very busy schedule, but worth every moment of our time. Concluding this article, we ask for your prayers that God's protection and hand of providence will be seen among the saints of the Nigerian Church. They send their love and greetings to all.

they never had the numbers or strength to win in the battle against the Lamanites.

Let us remember this. God blesses and protects those who serve Him and call upon His name. He gives them strength beyond human comprehension to accomplish what they must. He hears their cries. He protects them, he cares for them. Let us call upon Him with praise and thanksgiving.

With love,
Sister Jan

Note of Thanks

I would like to thank everyone for their cards, phone calls, visits and most especially their prayers and words of encouragement during my hospital stay and recovery from surgery. It makes one realize the importance of reaching out to others in their time of need and more fully appreciate the wonderful fellowship we have within The Church of Jesus Christ. May God bless you all.

Brother John Bilsky
Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch

Missionary Visit to Nigeria

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bring the good news of salvation, with the desire to speak to every person they meet about The Church of Jesus Christ. They are assisting the priesthood of their districts in evangelizing the Gospel everywhere they go.

We spent a few hours visiting our Secondary School with 1200 students. We have requested that the Church be permitted to place a member of the Priesthood full time to be a spiritual adviser and conduct daily worship on campus. Other activities on our agenda were a visit to the Social Welfare Educational Development Center that has 38 Orphan Children, two primary schools that are being educated and at the same time being taught the faith of our Church by teachers who are members of our Church. The newest project is a poultry farm, which has recently

me will be done to you. Many will die by fire, you will be hunted and scattered and you shall suffer the pains of death by fire, as I suffer."

One of the priests, a young man named Alma, listened to the words and preaching of Abinadi. He knew of the sins of Noah and the other priests and he begged King Noah not to put Abinadi to death. King Noah was furious and sent soldiers to kill Alma. King Noah burned Abinadi by fire in anger over all his truths.

Alma went into hiding for many days and wrote down all the teachings of Abinadi. He began to secretly share Abinadi's words with others who also believed and repented of all their sins. These few believers were the beginning of a large group of Godly people.

Everything Abinadi preached came true. A huge band of Lamanite warriors attacked. This time, God was not called on. King Noah and his band of lying priests ran to the wilderness to hide. The people were defeated and enslaved. Thousands of families had no dads or husbands left alive. The Lamanite king forced the Nephites to give them half of all they owned. His soldiers beat and hurt the people whenever they wanted. He put guards around their country so they could not escape.

The people who turned away from God's good laws began to suffer. When they had served God, He gave them great power to fight, win, and protect their families. When the people hated God, and pushed him away,

* WEDDINGS *

Brother Mike Balilo and Sister Elizabeth Gonzalez were united in holy matrimony in the San Diego, California Branch on October 5, 2002.

Children Blessed

Candice Renne Covalesky, daughter of Daniel and Sister Sherrie Covalesky, was blessed on November 24, 2002 at Greensburg, Pennsylvania Branch.

Ethan Bicelis Griffith, son of Sister Heylan and Brother Bryan Griffith, was blessed on April 28, 2002 in the Forest Hills Branch, Holiday, Florida.

Brandon Scott Jochim, son of Scott and Sarah Jochim, was blessed on July 28, 2002 in the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch.

Caitlyn Louise Monaghan, daughter of Brother Patrick and Sister Tonia Monaghan, was blessed on August 4, 2002 in the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch.

Holden Michael Ivey, son of Brother Mike and Sister Karen Ivey, was blessed on November 24, 2002 in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sister Karen Lynn Mellor was baptized on January 5, 2003 in the Greensburg, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Timothy Gehly, and confirmed by Brother Paul Gehly.

Sister Rachel Benyola was baptized on July 11, 2002 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. She was baptized by Brother Douglas Obradovich and confirmed by Brother Jerry Benyola.

Brother Brett John (B.J.) Gensburg was baptized on January 19, 2003 in the Liberty, Ohio Branch. He was baptized and confirmed by Brother Frank Giovannone.

Sister Melissa Coppa was baptized on September 1, 2002 in the San Diego, California Branch. She was baptized by Brother Mark Coppa and confirmed by Brother Lou Ciccati.

Brother Daniel Hemmings was baptized on September 1, 2002 in the San Diego, California Branch. He was baptized by Brother Thomas M. Liberto, and confirmed by Brother Thomas P. Liberto.

Brother Mike Balilo was baptized on December 8, 2002 in the San Diego, California Branch. He was baptized by Brother Isidro Gonzalez and confirmed by Brother Mark Coppa.

Brother Robert Kaye was reinstated into The Church of Jesus Christ on November 30, 2002 in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch.

Brother Steven Brown was baptized on January 19, 2003 in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch. He was baptized by Apostle Isaac Smith and confirmed by Brother Tito.

Ordination

Brother Paul Vinsick was ordained an Elder in the Bell, California Branch on August 18, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Bob McDonnell and he was ordained by Brother Joe Ciarolla.

Brother Jason Monaghan was ordained an Elder in the Greensburg, Pennsylvania Branch on January 19, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Timothy Gehly and he was ordained by Apostle Russell Cadman.

Sister Maria Peterkin was ordained a Deaconess in the New Brunswick, New Jersey Branch on January 12, 2003. Her feet were washed by Sister Betty D'Orazio and she was ordained by Brother Jim Sgro.

Brother Jordan Gianetti was ordained a Deacon in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch on December 1, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Pete Gianetti, Jr. and he was ordained by Apostle Joseph Calabrese.

Brother Patrick Gianetti was ordained a Deacon in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch on December 1, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Pete Gianetti, Jr., and he was ordained by Brother Pete Gianetti, Sr.

OBITUARIES

SUE MAREK

Sister Sue Marek of the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to her reward on August 20, 2002. She is survived by one daughter, Donna Lea Dick; three grandchildren, Tommy, Debbie and Amy; and one great-grandchild, Mackenzie.

CHUCK JUMPER

Brother Chuck Jumper, an Elder in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to his reward on January 27, 2003. He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Bruce and Sister Marty Jumper; as well as three daughters, Sisters Joyceann, Carol and Rhoda Jumper. He is also survived by two sisters and their husbands, Janet and Andy Gula and Rosemarie and Terry Stoops, and a brother, Kenneth.

ALFRED DOMINICO

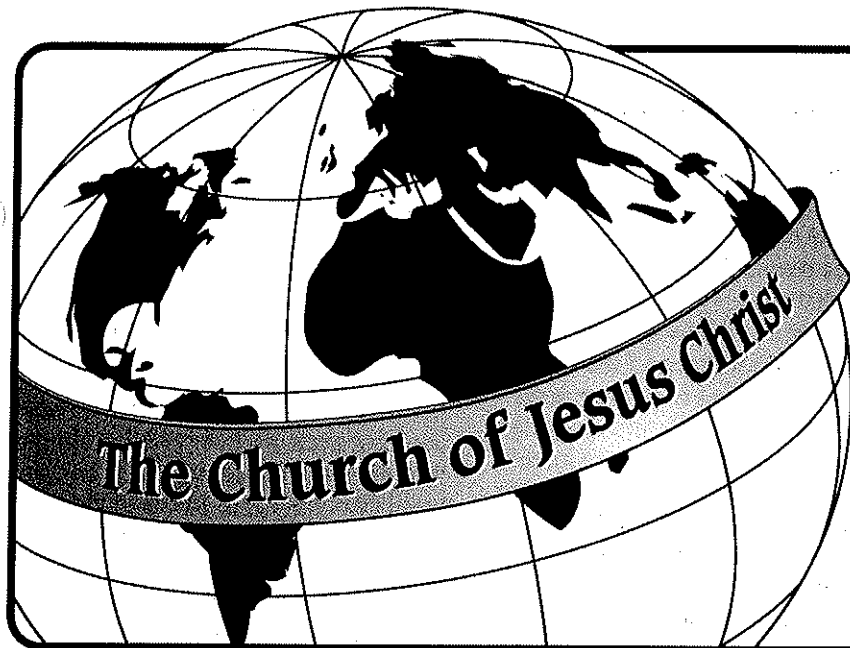
Brother Alfred Dominico of the San Diego, California Branch, passed on to his reward on January 22, 2003. He is survived by his wife, Sister Josephine (nee Aquilino) of San Diego, California; sons, David and Fred; six grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren.

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The Gospel News

World Headquarters Monongahela, PA, USA

May, 2003

Volume 59, No. 5

Missionary Trip To Colombia

By Evangelist Richard Scaglione

My second missionary trip to our Mission in Bogota, Colombia from January 18th through the 27th, 2003 was blessed with God's peace and protection. I traveled with the Co-Chairman of the Colombia work, Evangelist Robert Nicklow, Jr. and Brothers Jim Sgro and Frank Palacios. We found our brothers and sisters well and continuing to hold up the banner of the Lord. Despite news reports of violence from rebel groups outside of Bogota, we traveled without any danger or fear. We felt the power of the prayers that were being offered by our brothers and sisters back home.

We received royal treatment from our hosts, the family of Brother Juan Carlos Torres. We shared God's love and close fellowship, a trademark of The Church of Jesus Christ. We also enjoyed Sister Marisol's good cooking and the abundance of food, another trademark of the Church.

A pleasant adjustment was quickly made to the warm weather, with temperatures from the low 60's to the low 80's. We heard reports about the "great freeze" in the northern U.S.

Our main concern during our visit was to strengthen our members by preaching, teaching, and sharing the love of the Church. We emphasized the important ordinances of the Church, such as baptism, reception of the Holy Ghost, communion, the blessing of children, and the need for workers to spread the Gospel among their families and friends. Our members and visitors who attended showed their interest, attention, and agreement with all that we presented and discussed. We also questioned several members concerning their calling into ordained offices. God's spirit was prevalent, and the humility of our members was apparent.

Our Sunday services saw the hunger of our members for the Communion, the first time since early September they had the opportunity to partake. God blessed us with experiences and dreams from home, showing what we were doing 2,500 miles away.

During our stay, we confirmed two sisters who had been baptized in September, but were suddenly called to the hospital where relatives had been involved in a serious automobile accident. One niece was hospitalized

for 45 days. Our prayers for them were answered, as they have made a complete recovery. More important, the girls traveled six hours to be in our meeting to meet those who had prayed for them.

One sister, Ana Olivia Casas, was ordained a Deaconess. Sister Marisol Torres washed her feet, and Brother Jim Sgro ordained her. Brother Bob Nicklow blessed two children, Viviana Casas (12 years old) and Juan Alexander Hernandez (about 5 years old). We anointed many for various afflictions and prayed for those requesting strength and understanding about our Church. All in attendance seemed impressed that we took time to explain all that we do is supported by the Word of God and examples of Christ. We also made sure that each step was translated in Spanish by Brother Palacios so they would understand all that was being done and the reasons why.

Attendance at our meetings on Sunday averaged 13 members, 7 adult visitors, and 8 children. Our evening meetings throughout the week saw about 10 members, 6 adult visitors, and 5 children. A special informal meeting on Wednesday evening, where pizza was served, brought out 26 adults and 14 children. All told, we had a total of 36 visitors who attended, some only

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My Testimony

By Brother Albert Scuotto

First there are few things you must know about me and my family. We have not been to church in years. But we still believe in God and in the Church. Every time we had a problem we called on God and the Church for help, and have never been turned away; the ministers always came to us. And if we asked to be anointed we were. And all the brothers and sisters were also there if we needed them to pray or for help in other ways. Now on with my testimony.

It all started on Sunday January 19, 2003 when we had to call 911. I was having a problem with my heart. As soon as they checked my heart I was on my way to the hospital. I had a problem with my heart rhythm and heart rate being too high (over 180 bpm). For four days the doctors were trying to control it with no success. Then the doctors had a talk with me and my wife about a test they wanted to do on me. Well the doctors said I might not make it through the test. So my family and I had a talk about the test and what might happen. We came to the decision not to do the test, and to leave it up to God. My family went home that night about 8:30 p.m. About 9:30 p.m. I received a telephone call. It was Brother Jim Calabro; my wife must have called him. He asked me what the problem was and if I wanted to be anointed. I said yes, and he was here in no time at all.

I was on the telephone with my wife when he arrived. My wife asked Brother Jim if she and my family could stay on the line to listen to him anoint me. He said yes. He started to anoint me, and while he was praying something happened to me and him and we both started crying and hugging. I don't know how long we hugged and cried but I spilled my heart out to him. After a while Jimmy remembered that my wife was still on the telephone. He started talking to her then hung up after awhile. That night at 11:30 p.m. when the nurse

checked me out my heart rate was down to 70 bpm and everything else checked out okay also. I felt good. This is one month later and every thing is still okay.

My wife also has a testimony of what happened to her and the family at home while I was being anointed. Back at home my wife, my daughter and son and two friends were kneeling down in prayer while I was being anointed and they all started to cry. They said they felt the presence of God. After I was anointed and we talked for awhile, Jimmy realized that my family was still on the phone and he picked it up and started to talk to my wife. Then my wife asked him who the other minister was she heard talking. He said there was no other minister there. My wife said, "I heard him." Jimmy said "What did he say?" She said she heard him say, "God will take care of you."

Well I got out of the hospital on January 26, 2003 and my heart is doing well. The only problem I have is every thing I eat or drink tastes like poison. And all my doctors could not tell me why.

I went to church on the first Sunday I could. That was February 2, 2003 and gave my testimony, and my wife gave hers. Afterward my wife and I were anointed. We all started to cry. Both of us said we felt the Spirit of God in the Church, and we asked the ministers if we could be reinstated in the Church and they said yes. And we were anointed and reinstated in the Church.

That Sunday was the first time in years that we received communion. And again we both started to cry. It felt so good to be back to church again, with all our sisters and brothers. We thank you all. I can't find the words in my heart to show how we really feel, but God knows. And I pray He touches your hearts as He has touched ours.

That day when I went home from church I ate a salami sandwich and guess what? No more poison taste, thank God! I give this testimony in thanks to all the brothers and sisters in all the branches for their prayers for me. I tell you that God is

still in our Church, if you need Him just ask.

An Experience

Shortly before Christmas, I was feeling overwhelmed by the problems of this world. I turned to the Lord and told Him how I felt. In the morning, I awoke to the beautiful singing of a chorus of angels. The words that I heard were, "He loves me too much to forsake me, or give me one trial too much." Praise God!

Sister Sharon D'Amico Church

Missionary Trip to Colombia

Continued from Page 1

once, but most of them nearly every evening. More important, 8 of our visitors were young couples with small children. Also, 7 youngsters are 11 to 13 years old, and 15 are from 1½ to 9 years old. This shows the potential for future growth. Many of our visitors attended the Mission for the first time. They said they will continue to attend. Some of them walk a few miles, and some take a bus to the meetings. We appreciated their effort and desire.

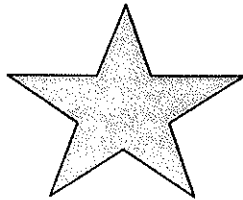
Another goal was accomplished on this trip. Plans have been formulated to begin a music program for the younger people (older ones also, if they desire). An electronic keyboard was purchased, along with three guitars. The Mission now has 2 keyboards and 4 guitars. An instructor will be available to give lessons. All of this was done with a very reasonable amount of money. We anticipate a great interest and another means of drawing others to the Church.

Continue to pray for our Mission, as there is constant danger and unrest in Bogota and surrounding parts of the country. However, we feel that God has His protective arm around our brothers and sisters, not only here, but all our mission fields throughout the world.

Sponsored by the FENCE
Committee—GMBA
The Church of Jesus Christ



Teachers of all Ages: Take home role play lessons,
at-home activities, mentoring ideas and more!



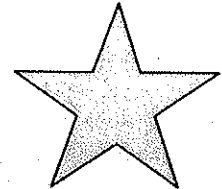
REACH THEM TO TEACH THEM!

FENCE Workshop

August 23, 2003

9:00 A.M.—2:30 P.M.

Monongahela, PA Branch



REACH THEM TO TEACH THEM REGISTRATION FORM

Fee: \$10.00 per person (includes lunch and materials) Deadline: June 1, 2003

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

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Branch and Mission News

A Special Day at Windsor, Ontario

By Sister Katherine Vitto

November 17, 2002 was set aside for a baby blessing, but we enjoyed more than a baby blessing, we received "showers of blessing."

Many family members and friends of the Jordan/Onorato family were present for the blessing. Also visiting us was Brother Dominic Thomas, his wife Sister Delores, and Brother Matt Collison from Southampton.

Brother Don Collison opened our meeting in prayer. In his prayer, he reminded us of how precious each soul is before the Lord.

Brother Dominic spoke to us recalling his early days of being baptized and the Windsor branch. Today he was visiting us to ask God's blessing on Steven James Jordan, son of Rachel and Jim Jordan. Brother Dominic read from 3rd Nephi 17:11-25, regarding Jesus healing the multitude and commanding their children to be brought to Him. He took the little children, one by one, and blessed and prayed for them. It is written, "The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father." What a glorious situation to be in.

Brother Dominic was inspired to ask all of the children that were in attendance to come forward. The ministry encircled them and prayed for them. God has blessed our branch with many wonderful children. Our hope is that they will be the future Windsor Branch. We then sang, *Jesus Loves Me*. Brother Dominic continued to speak to us about his experience regarding little children. He reminded us that it is vital that we pray for our children every day. We sang *Come and Dine* while the sacrament was served.

Brother Frank Vitto followed,

reminding us of the great responsibility held by our Brother Dominic and his wife and asked us to continually pray for them. Brother Frank spoke on how we need to weep before the Lord and to draw closer to God through fasting and prayer. He further related how God is waiting for us to humble ourselves, like little children, before He can work with us, and that we need to acknowledge our weaknesses in order to be used of God.

The brothers and sister expressed many wonderful testimonies of praise and thankfulness to God.

Brother Dick Lobzun announced the joyful news that Brother Brad Labute will be ordained a Teacher in the next couple weeks. Brother Brad expressed his feelings on how God will use us in the capacity that He sees fit and that the Lord wants us to be as little children, for little children do not see faults.

Brother Matt Collison ended our service by expressing his gratitude for our prayers and support of the Saugeen Mission. He reminded us that the Lord will use the Gentiles to aid in bringing Israel home.

We concluded by singing, *How Long Has It Been*. Prayer was offered by Brother John Collison. We praise God for the wonderful blessings shared by all. His Spirit was felt by each and every one of us.

Forest Hills, Holiday, Florida Branch

"Once a man, whom we know as the Son of God, Hung upon the cruel tree; He suffered pain as no mortal man, He took my place – He did it all for me.

"He did it all for me, Each drop of blood, He shed for even me; When the Savior cried – Bowed His head and died, O praise the Lord, HE DID IT ALL FOR ME."

Sunday, February 9, 2003, after opening our meeting in prayer, Brother John Griffith led the meeting with this hymn. The sacrament table was uncovered, so we would be able to

relate to the depth of the love Jesus had for us and focus on the message.

Brother John referenced Luke 22, when Jesus met with the Disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He was betrayed. "This Gospel was given of God through Jesus Christ. We need to feel the effect of Communion [the Bread and the Wine]. Jesus Christ suffered for us to be saved. The Apostle Paul, in Galatians, speaks to the churches of Galatia telling them of the Love Jesus had for us." He also read from III Nephi 27:13-20 concerning baptism. "The debt was paid for our sins. We should become perfect as He and His Father. Perfection is reached through faith in the Gospel and faith in His Love. The words of Moroni 2:1-3 speak concerning the bestowal of the Holy Ghost. What are we doing with this eternal life Christ gave us? When you partake of sacrament, remember that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for each of us."

Brother Tony Calabrese followed speaking few words, but with a powerful message. "If you don't come to God, how can He hold you within His circle of love to give you that salvation? Recognize the sign to be baptized."

Communion was served as we each remembered how the Son of God gave His life so that we might be saved. How He loved us to die on the cross to give us salvation.

The meeting was then open to testimony, to give thanks and praise to God. Many praises of thanksgiving and love to our Lord were given. I think we all knew in our hearts, the Lord would bestow a beautiful blessing upon us this day. It flowed from our Sunday School class, reading through several scriptures on faith. Our cups were surely filled. But, our Lord does work in mysterious ways. Linnea Davella stood up for the first time and asked for her baptism. This was now the beginning. What a beautiful way to end our meeting.

However, we didn't end there. We met at the river's edge at 5 PM to baptize our Sister Linnea as she rendered obedience to the Lord. It had

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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30).

Victory in any situation in life is something everyone expects, but not everyone receives. When wars are fought, as the current one against Iraq, the United States and allied forces were convinced that victory would be theirs, even though there may be many casualties along the way. Those in Iraq who are against the U.S. were convinced that victory would be theirs. In war, however, both sides cannot win. There always must be one winner, and one loser. In everyday life, people are faced with challenges every day, and always look to succeed or overcome each and every challenge they face. Some do, and some don't. For those who overcome, they win. For those who do not overcome, they lose.

Recently, my aunt passed on to spend an eternity with the Lord. This scripture in Psalms came to me very strongly prior to her death. I didn't realize why these words stayed with me so strongly, until the day she died, and then I understood why. Victory was hers! Her foes (the enemy of all righteousness) did not rejoice over her. Her soul has been kept alive, and is in Paradise now. Complete joy truly came to her in the morning when her loving Savior embraced her, and welcomed her home. During this same week, another sister who was a member of our branch for many years also passed away at 45 years old. Although it was very sad to hear of her passing at such a young age, I was amazed at the experience I heard. Prior to her passing, the nurse (not a member of the Church) saw a crown on her head. She ran out to get another nurse to come and see. When she returned it was gone. Our sister was victorious! She didn't let anyone take her crown. It was hers. Joy came in the morning for her soul.

In both of these sister's lives, they were the winner and the devil was the loser. Brothers, sisters and friends, when Jesus is on our side, we can NEVER be the loser! This life is like a grain of sand on a beach. Compared to the entire beach (eternity), the time we spend here is so incredibly short. Yet victory or defeat is determined in this short life of ours. Jesus promised He would never leave us or forsake us. He promised us a mansion that He prepared for all those that would love and serve Him. He promised us that all things would work together for good if we love and serve Him. This means that whether we succeed or fail in the everyday battles we face, in ALL cases, we actually will succeed, because God will turn EVERY failure into a success. This doesn't mean we will always get everything we want in life, but it does mean that whatever happens, in the long run, it will be the right thing for us.

This scripture points to the fact that God's anger endures for only a moment. God is not a God of anger. His love and forgiveness is greater than we can ever understand. This is why once we repent of the things we do to displease Him, each and every day, we need to FORGET it. God doesn't hold a grudge. He forgets all our sins we repent of, and erases it. It is as if it never happened. This is the character of the God we serve, and causes us to be victorious.

Weeping and sorrow in any situation can endure for a night, but He will always carry us through. Joy comes in the morning of any trial in this life, when it is light and we can see clearly the end result and reason for that trial. The end result is always something good for those who love and serve God. And, if we cannot see the reason why something happens to us in this life, we will see clearly in the morning when our soul is returned to its maker, and joy is ours forever and ever! Knowing this can help us to always praise Him when we "remember His holiness!"

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork

Ammon, Warrior and Man of Faith in God

(Alma 17-29)

Dear Friends,

Could you go to another country to live where people hated you? Could you go if you were a different skin color than they were so you would really stand out? Could you go to tell them about Jesus when you already knew they had rejected him?

Ammon, his three brothers, their friends and Alma were off to the land of the Lamanites to do this. God had put a great love into their hearts for these people. These young men had been raised in the Church to know God, but they had turned away from Him and had used their popularity to confuse and weaken others in the Church. Their families fasted and prayed for God to change them. And God sent an angel with a voice like thunder to warn them to quit trying to destroy the Church or they would be destroyed. They were so sorry. They repented and were baptized. They began to fast and pray and ask God to use them as missionaries.

When Mosiah, their father, asked if one of them would consider becoming king, they each refused. They told their father they wanted to go preach to their Lamanite enemies. Mosiah went to God in prayer and God told him, "Let them go up for many shall believe on their words, and they shall have eternal life; and I will deliver thy sons out of the hands of the



Lamanites" (Mosiah 28:7). So these young men and some of the other brothers in the Church left for the lands where the Lamanites lived. They were sent by God to several different lands. Alma went to the land of Zarahemla. Ammon was sent to the land of Ishmael, ruled by King Ishmael. While protecting the king's flocks from robbers, he cut off the enemies' arms that were raised against him. Because of his father's prayers and faith in God, Ammon was not killed.

The astonished servants of the king ran to tell about Ammon's power. King Ishmael wanted to know what made Ammon different. Ammon told him about God. The King was deeply moved. He wanted to serve God too. He asked Ammon to go see his father, King of all the Lamanites who lived in the land of Nephi. But God gave Ammon a dream and told Ammon that they had to go rescue his brothers, Aaron and their friends. They had been sent to Middoni, a land where the people were harder hearted. They had been spit upon, beaten and unfairly thrown into prison. Yet they were patient and prayerful while they suffered. King Lamoni was friends with the king of Middoni and he offered to go with Ammon and get his brothers freed.

On the way they ran into Lamoni's father, the great king over all the Lamanite people. He was furious that Lamoni was with a hated Nephite and he was mad that Lamoni was going to see the king of Middoni instead of coming to see him. He told his son that all Nephites were liars. He started to fight Ammon with a sword to kill him. But God again protected Ammon and gave him amazing

strength to beat the great king.

The king offered him half of his kingdom to not kill him. But Ammon said all he wanted was for the king to allow his son, King Lamoni, to rule in peace, and be free to do whatever Lamoni wanted to do. This shocked the great king;. He wondered why a hated Nephite turned down power and only asked for help for his friend. He marveled at the love Ammon had for his son, King Lamoni. He told Ammon, "Go, free your brothers then come tell me more about these things." Ammon found his brothers and the Lord told him to send Aaron to the great King of the Lamanites while he returned with Lamoni to set up churches in the land.

Aaron and the brothers had great success in teaching the King about the Lord. They preached throughout the country and thousands of people believed the words they heard. They changed their name to be the Anti-Nephi-Lehis. They were against the

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WORD SEARCH

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Forest Hills, Holiday, FL

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been raining all day but the Lord saw fit to lighten the darkness as a new child surrendered her soul to Him. She was baptized by Brother Sam Risola. What a beautiful sight to see our sister emerge from the waters with a big smile on her face cleansed of her sins.

We met back at the Church. The congregation joined in a singspiration for a short while. Brother Scott Griffith opened in prayer. A few special selections were sung. Brother Ike D. Smith sang, *Taste the Grass on the Summit*. While Brother Ike was singing, Sister Pearl saw him all in white. Sister Linnea came up front, as the ministry formed a circle and knelt in prayer. Brother Phil Benyola offered prayer for the Lord's blessing upon the ministry. Brother Scott Griffith was touched to offer prayer for the reception of the Holy Ghost upon our Sister Linnea. The Lord made manifest His Love as the prayer was being said. "SEALED" was the interpretation of the tongues spoken. Brother Jim Speck heard the words, "Thus Saith the Lord" at the same time. He is so alive in us all!

Sister Linnea gave testimony of how the Lord had called her before, but she didn't answer. She had a struggle, but was able to cut loose and stand up to her calling. The Lord is so merciful to us.

Our Teachers, Brother Bryan Griffith and Brother Dewayne Eutsey, both spoke of the "Gift" of the Holy Ghost. Brother Bryan read from Mosiah and III Nephi. Brother Dewayne read from Acts 2:37, 38. Brother Sam Risola said, "We must open that door to let the Lord in and we will be cleansed of our sins to start anew."

After several testimonies and reflections concerning our Sister Linnea were spoken, our young people sang, *For Those Tears I Died*. We dismissed with a wonderful blessing. What a glorious day we had with the love of God showering us with His light of love and hope. How can anyone deny that He is a true and living God!

Branch #2, Detroit, MI

On February 16th, 2003, we were honored to have Brother Tom Everett visit Branch #2. Brother Tom was representing the AMOC and was visiting to present Sister Rose Milantoni with a plaque of recognition for all of her missionary efforts over the years.

Brother Tom opened our meeting speaking from the 5th Chapter of Jacob, the parable of the tame and wild olive tree, and the Lord and servants of the vineyard. He read from the 61st verse, "Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit."

Brother Tom related this parable to the work we have to do in this day and age in the Church. "There is an experience given to the Church that we have been given the last ministry, to lift the last warning voice to the world."

He shared that while we like to enjoy comfortable things, be secure and safe, and sit back and relax for a while, the Lord says that there is a lot of work to be done. And He is looking for servants that want to labor for Him. Brother Tom encouraged us to step out on faith. "If you want to walk on the water, you have to get out of the boat."

Brother Tom spoke about the state of our nation at this time. "This country, since the revolutionary war, has never been in a position as it is today where we have to be concerned about our own safety here." He compared the comments of our leaders today to be alert, go about our daily lives, and enjoy our freedom, to those of our Lord Jesus Christ to be sober minded, vigilant, and occupy until I return.

He encouraged us to not be afraid during these troubling times. "Fear is Satan's tool. In Revelations it says that one of the first groups cast into the lake of fire are the fearful. He operates in fear; we are to operate in faith. We must go about our daily lives

always focusing on our duty as members of the Church to spread the Gospel, especially during these times."

He also felt inspired to share a dream he had. In his dream he was at a region conference and his uncle Tony Scolaro, who has passed away, came up to the front of the room to give a report. He said, "Brothers and sisters it is wonderful to be among you this morning. Where I've been I've been very busy." Brother Tony's granddaughter also had a dream where he told her he was "learning a lot of new things."

He then asked Sister Rose to come forward and accept the plaque and recognition for her years living and serving the San Carlos Mission and Inner City, as well as her work in Muncey and the contribution to her late husband, Brother Joe Milantoni's, ministerial duties. Brother Tom began by saying, "On behalf of the AMOC, may God Bless you for being an example to everyone."

He continued the presentation, "In conjunction with the Native American Committee, the brothers voted to give you this Life Time Service Award. The plaque reads, 'Presented with loving appreciation and thanks to Brother Joseph and Sister Rose Milantoni for over 40 years of outstanding service and compassion for the seed of Joseph at Muncey, Six Nations, San Carlos, and Inner City by resolution of the American Missionary Operating Committee.'"

Sister Rose expressed herself saying that every dream she has heard about Brother Joe after his passing was about him working. She expressed that she was so glad to hear Brother Tom's dream because it confirmed her feelings, and that while many think our work is over once we are in heaven, she knows there is more work to do and that Brother Joe is still working. She encouraged the young people to get involved in Missionary work. "Missionary work isn't always glory. We had some rough times when we were in San Carlos, but there were times when it was glorious and especially when someone comes into

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Branch #2, Detroit, MI

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the Church. That's a reward." Sister Rose finished by saying, "I am so thankful. I didn't expect this. It is a complete surprise to me. Thank you very much and God Bless you."

Sister Karen Pandone, Sister Rose's daughter, was then asked to come forward and express herself, as she was present during their many years of service. Sister Karen shared a dream that supported Brother Tom's expression that we have work to do even in heaven. Karen was sick and missed her father and wished she could call him to anoint her. She was calling to her father in her sleep. She dreamt that she saw him standing in a group of young people and he was intent in what he was saying. He looked over and when he saw her he just waved and went on talking. She felt rejected. After he finished his conversation, he came to her. She asked why he did not come right over and he said, "I have work to do. Don't you understand I have work to do?"

Sister Karen spoke about the work in Inner City, where she is now a member, and of how she is proud to be a part of the work that her parents helped start. She also shared a few words about her mother stating that there is not a day that goes by that Sister Rose does not show that she loves the Lord.

McKees Rocks, PA Branch Visits Rochester, NY Branch

By Sister Bette Panfile

On July 14th, 2002, our proximity to Hill Cumorah in Palmyra, New York, brought us a most welcome busload of saints from the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch to worship with us on Sunday morning.

As you approached the church building, one could hear the loud and beautiful singing by the brothers and

sisters of *I Surrender All* through the open windows. Opening prayer was offered by Brother Paul Ciotti Jr., after which the congregation sang, *He Lives*.

The opening sermon was preached by Brother Tony Ricci from the 14th chapter of St. Matthew, when the disciples were on the boat and Jesus came toward them walking on the sea. Then Peter spoke to the Lord. Jesus bid him "Come," and Peter stepped out of the boat and out of his comfort zone to walk on the water toward Jesus. But Peter became afraid and began to sink and he simply cried, "Lord, save me!" Three simple, powerful words. The Lord replied, "Oh, thou of little faith." "We too should get out of our comfort zone and we also can do great things as did Peter, if we call out to the Lord."

We sang the chorus of *To the Work* several times after which Brother Paul Ciotti, Jr. continued on Brother Tony's theme. "Jesus sees us through our struggles and He never leaves us alone, just as the disciples were not alone on the stormy sea. We should keep on toiling and rowing through the storms of life and God will see us through, for there is nothing He cannot do." Brother Paul went on to say it is our responsibility to help others who are in distress and sinking in sin.

Brother Bill Colangelo also made reference to Peter and that we should cast our nets in deep water, not shallow water, and become fishers of men.

Continuing on with the lesson of Peter, Brother Dick Lawson said that after Peter stepped out of the boat and looked down at the waves, he lost his focus and began to sink. "We should all be concerned about losing our focus and remember Christ's promise to us, that if two or three are gathered in His name, He will be with us. We in Rochester are very small in number and we should always remember to keep focused and remain strong and the Lord will be with us and bless us abundantly."

Brother Ralph Ciotti spoke briefly about the prodigal son and the elaborate preparations for his return and the open arms and rejoicing of the wel-

coming father. So do the angels in Heaven rejoice when a soul comes to Jesus. Brother John Manes emphasized the importance of praising God and giving testimony as to the blessings in our lives.

Our elder from Rochester, Brother Andrew Locci, gave his testimony as to how prayer helped him when he was spiritually drowning years ago, and more recently through a very serious illness.

While sacrament was being served by Brother Tony and Brother Paul, the congregation sang, *Break Thou the Bread of Life*. Singing continued with hymn #20, *Amazing Grace*, after which Brother Andrew invited all to testify, including non-members. We heard many inspiring and emotional testimonies as to God's grace and blessings. Our visiting brothers and sisters spoke of the Hill Cumorah Pageant they saw the night before and how happy and blessed they were to worship with us. The feeling was definitely mutual.

At the end of the service we were introduced to the bus driver of the charter bus and he was going to sing for us. He told us that he is not just a bus driver, but he is also a minister with the Assembly of God Church. With his beautiful rich voice he sang *Nearer My God to Thee*. He asked if we were a blessing to those around us and spoke of his experiences as a Christian school teacher. He then sang, *Make Me a Blessing*, and we all joined in on the chorus.

Sandwiches and refreshments were served in the basement of the church after which we wished our brother and sisters a safe journey back to McKees Rocks.

Every year, the Hill Cumorah Pageant is held in the month of July in Palmyra, New York. Why not plan on attending the Pageant next year on Saturday night and then worshipping with us on Sunday morning?

We are very small in number here in Rochester, but our doors are always open and we welcome everyone with open arms.

Thank you, brothers and sisters from McKees Rocks, for visiting with us and God bless you all.

Lake Worth, Florida

By Sister Josie Jasmin

On Saturday, March 1st, 2003 the Region Officers came to Lake Worth, Florida and held an Ordained Officers meeting to give us encouragement and to instruct us on the "Lets Grow" program. It was a very interesting session with our Region President, Brother Sam Risola along with Brothers George Kovacic and Dennis Moraco. We discussed ways to help our Church grow here on our land. Our brothers were very helpful in giving us different ideas for this program to succeed.

The Region Officers stayed over for the Sunday Service along with their wives, Sister Arlene, Sister Sue and Sister Jill. Brother George Kovacic opened the service. Brother George used as his text, Luke Chapter 7, starting with the 18th verse concerning John the Baptist and his disciples and how he sent them out to see Jesus. John is known as the Prophet of Prophets, as he was the one preaching of the coming of Christ and then baptized the Lord. Verse 28 states the following: "For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

There is a value and importance that each person plays in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus left us the comforter to keep us as lively stones. We were called into the Gospel to be used in His kingdom. We bring our talents and gifts in doing God's will. Consider the importance of being a citizen in God's Kingdom!

Brother Dennis Moraco followed expressing himself on the same text and stressing how Jesus told John's disciples to go and say what they saw. Brother Dennis also read from Mark chapter 16, verses 15-18 pointing out to everyone that we are witnesses of the things that Christ has done for us. "What better thing is there than to be a witness for Christ and the examples He set forth before us, one of the blessings being, the miracle of the washing away of our sins when we were baptized?"

Brother Dennis asked the question, "Do our children and grandchildren know our testimony? Are we a witness to God's blessings to our family? With our testimony comes a great responsibility to live righteously that we will be good examples and witnesses for the Lord and His Gospel."

Brother Sam Risola, Region President, continued and stressed to us how God is the same today as He was yesterday. "We need to be completely dependent on the power of God. We need to be convicted as many of the old time brothers and sisters were." Brother Sam encouraged us to run the race and most importantly to finish the race. "Stand strong and stay firm in the Gospel!"

Beautiful testimonies followed with giving praise and glory to our Heavenly Father, each person rising as lively stones to give witness of God's blessings in our lives.

We also had a duet which was sung by Brother Keith and Steven Baldwin, and at the closing of our service the priesthood sang to the congregation. They all made a joyful noise unto the Lord.

On Sunday March 9th Brother Sam Difalco was visiting from Michigan as he often does at this time of the year. It was wonderful to have our brother with us once again and he opened the service stressing that, "The time is far spent, and we need to stay focused on the Lord and to stay on the right path. The Bible and The Book of Mormon are our tools, tools to direct us through life. The word of God should be within us, deep within our hearts. Are we doers of the word? Do we show the world who we are? It is our duty to be a good example to all that we come in contact with. The Truth is exactly that, the Truth and we need to proclaim it. Tell the world that there will be a New Jerusalem here on this earth." Brother Sam read from 3rd Nephi 20:20-22 concerning the covenant and the establishment of the New Jerusalem, stating also that the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of the people. "In this Gospel we have everything, we have the Bible, The Book of Mormon and we have the Authority. It must go throughout the world."

Brother Sam also read from the Book of Revelations, Chapter 20, verses 4-6 concerning the thousand year reign with Christ. Brother Sam exhorted us to be faithful followers of the word that we may one day meet our loved ones who have gone to be with the Lord in glory. "Fill ourselves with the good food of the Gospel, only this food can completely satisfy our hunger. We must hunger and thirst after righteousness. Let the Bible and The Book of Mormon be our compass to lead us in the right direction."

Brother Carl Romano followed and asked, "Can we still sing the song of redeeming love? We are a chosen and peculiar people, set apart from all others. The restoration is a gift that we need to give to our families and friends. The Gospel is to be shared and not to be kept all for ourselves." Brother Carl reminded us of how everyone must be born again in the spirit.

Also visiting with us today was Brother Jerry, Sister Heather and their son Nico Difede from the Florida Keys.

Lockport, New York

The town of Lockport, New York, seems to rest quietly on Sunday mornings. But as Joel and I entered the sanctuary of The Church of Jesus Christ on July 21st, there was a flurry of activity taking place. A handful of saints were working diligently preparing for a very special gathering about to take place...a time of worship and praise; a time of singing and testimony; a time of prayer and communion; a time of fellowship and, of course, eating! The gathering could have been taking place in Erie, our home branch; it could have been taking place in any one of the branches or missions of the seven regions of the Church in the United States. It could have been taking place in an Indian Center in Canada or on a reservation in San Carlos. It could have been taking place in a village in Kenya or India, or on an island in the Philippines,

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Lockport, New York

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Dominica, or Italy. Today, for us, it was Lockport.

We quickly found ourselves engulfed in the arms of our dear brothers and sisters welcoming us as if we were two of the most important people in the world. Many hands made the time of preparation an enjoyable one. Conversation trickled from one subject to the next; a recent wedding, college and career plans of a young one, a garden and what is growing, an expected grandchild, a pending baptism, a Youth-In-Action tour, a trip to Hill Cummorah, health problems plaguing the child of a friend, a quick hands-on lesson about how to put the salad together, and of course, the taste-testing to ensure quality control and perfection! Suddenly, another stream of unexpected faces arrived and we found ourselves embracing and welcoming our church family and friends with smiles and laughter and joy.

Natural preparations nearly complete, the time for spiritual gathering had come. The introduction of a familiar tune prompted our voices to melody and song. The sound of the Gospel rang so sweetly through the open windows to the surrounding neighborhood. A prayer was offered and worship began. Reminiscent of past visits to this lovely old branch, Brother Dominic Thomas gently exhorted the faithful few to hold the fort, encouraging prayer that God would soon provide a fulltime shepherd for the flock.

Moroni 6:9 "And their meetings were conducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done." "Well done, thou good and faithful servants," was the prevailing theme as Brother Dominic shared testimonies of different individuals whose efforts have touched his heart, especially amongst the sisters of the Church. Emphasizing the importance of utilizing the talents God has given (Matthew 25:14-28), he stressed that God is con-

scious of all we do; therefore, we must stay strong and endure until the end.

"Why does God call us into the fold?" Brother Andy Locci continued. Diligently seeking the Lord's direction in prayer and through the scriptures, the Lord saw fit to touch his heart at the tender age of 18. God's purposes are not always for our understanding. Brother Andy never imagined he would serve as a minister for the Lord, a calling that has not always come easily. One of the great lessons he has learned is the importance of "working our talents" so that they produce much fruit. In addition, we must always pray first for growth in love, then in number.

Psalm 97 exalts, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." One of the talents we all have is to "praise and glorify the Lord in all things," Brother Joel Gehly continued. "God desires our praise no matter what condition we find ourselves in. All creation cries out in praise. How much more should we, as His dear children, praise the Lord through our song, our testimony, through sharing our talents, and in remaining humble before Him."

Brother Leonard Benyola challenged that many sincere individuals stumble and fall as they are taught by the precepts of men. "We, however, are commanded to seek out the lost and dying souls of mankind, our reasonable service unto Him. When we begin to question why we are called and what we, as individuals, can do, let us reflect upon men like Sidney Rigdon and William Bickerton, who held fast to the truth as thousands chose to turn away. We must allow our talents to shine as a light unto the world. We can do so willingly, or we can end up in the belly of a whale, like Jonah, struggling against the will of God."

With the pitter-patter of little feet anxiously waiting for the feast to begin, brothers and sisters began to savor the spiritual feast, one by one standing to thank God for goodness and mercy in their lives; for the opportunity to visit with family; for steadfastness in the Gospel; for a new husband and a new life; for protection in the time of war many years ago; for an increase in

number; for a healing and the privilege to continue serving. We then humbly joined together in prayer and the remembrance the Lord's Supper.

It could have been a time of testimony and communion taking place in any one of the branches or missions of the seven regions of the Church in the United States; it could have been taking place in an Indian Center in Canada or on a reservation in San Carlos; it could have been taking place in a village in Kenya or India, or on an island in the Philippines, Dominica, or Italy. Today for us, it was in the town of Lockport.

As Brother Joel and I travel throughout the world visiting with and getting to know our brothers and sisters in The Church of Jesus Christ, we thank God for all those who continue to faithfully hold fast to the pure and unadulterated Gospel. We love you all from the depths of our hearts.

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The Children's Corner

Continued from Page 6

prejudices and separation of the Nephites and the Lamanites. They joined the Church and promised Jesus never to fight or kill others again. Even when the people of the Anti-Nephi-Lehis were attacked, they chose to die rather than kill others. When other Lamanite armies came to

force them to fight or be killed, they allowed themselves to be killed. This touched the hearts of those armies, and thousands of them started to believe in God also.

Aaron and his brothers realized that these people needed to relocate by the Nephite nations where they could worship God and live in safety. Plans were made for them to move to the country of Jershon. Eventually, this generation raised faithful young sons who became warriors with Helaman fighting for religious freedom. They were people of amazing faith who never fell away.

Because of faith, five young men who were sinners repented and became great missionaries. Color differences and ancient hatreds fell away. Hate turned to love and thousands upon thousands of souls were saved. When people turned their hearts to God, faith made the impossible, possible. Let us each turn our hearts to God today. He hears our cries. Have faith. He is our God of power and love.

With Care,
Sister Jan

Note of Thanks

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We deeply appreciate your sincere prayers, calls and cards, which you have so graciously given during Brother Alfred Dominico's long illness. He passed away January 22, 2003 at 1:00 a.m. May God rest his soul. It was hard to lose someone so dear but God allowed us to have a 66-year marriage even though he was ill for many years. God bless you all who were such a comfort to my family and me. The Church in San Diego, California, and Lorain, Ohio were wonderful in remembering Brother Alfred at his funeral. Thank you all and God's blessings are wished to each and everyone.

Your Sister in Christ,
Josephine Dominico

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to those that mourn the loss of loved ones. May God bless and comfort you.

JAMES FORTUNATO, SR.

Brother James Fortunato, Sr., of the Youngstown, Ohio Branch passed onto his reward on July 4, 2002. He is survived by his wife, Sister Ann; son, Brother Jim Jr.; three daughters, Carol Ann Weamer, Dorothy Grover, and Marilyn Goldman; nine grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

JIM WILSON

Jim Wilson from Simi Valley, California, passed onto his reward on October 14, 2002. He is survived by his wife, Sister Joan Wilson.

LENA CARROZZINO

Sister Lena Carrozzino of the Youngstown, Ohio Branch passed onto her reward on November 28, 2002. She is survived by her daughter, Sister Linda Italiano; son Edward Carrozzino; and three grandchildren.

JUNE (JONES) TENIJIETH

Sister June (Jones) Tenijieth of the Lakeside, Arizona Branch passed on to her reward August 28, 2002. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Brother Jim Jones, father Emmitt Richeson, mother Lily Lethbridge and one brother, James Richeson. She is survived by her second husband, Brother Scott Tenijieth; three children, Joy Krasnasky, J.T. Jones and Judy Jones Salerno; two sons-in-law; Joseph Krasnasky and John Salerno; one brother, Paul Richeson; three sisters, Mary Jones, Paula Campbell and Barbara Richeson; five grandchildren, Kelly Perez, Jamie Rodriguez, Kristy Krasnasky, Kori Palmer and Kerry

Krasnasky; and ten great-grandchildren, Adam Perez, J.D. Rodriguez, Ryan Rodriguez, Colby Perez, Jasmine Rodriguez, Maci Garner, Riley Palmer, Valerie and Vanessa Rodriguez.

DONNA M. MILLER

Sister Donna M. Miller, of the Fort Pierce, Florida Branch passed onto her reward on February 12, 2003. She is survived by her husband, Steve Miller; daughters, Stephanie Miller and Robyn Miller and Melissa Johns; sons, Michael Blackburn, Daniel Blackburn and Jason Blackburn.

JOSEPHINE BERADINO

Sister Josephine Beradino of the Youngstown, Ohio Branch passed onto her reward on February 19, 2003. She is survived by her husband, Brother Ralph; two daughters, Sisters Sandra Cardillo and Sister Elaine Moore; one son, Ronald Beradino; nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

WILLIAM COSTARELLA

Brother William Costarella, of the Fort Pierce, Florida Branch, passed onto his reward on February 25, 2003. He was an ordained Elder in The Church of Jesus Christ. He is survived by his wife, Sister Anne Costarella; daughter, Sister Joanne Trainor; brother, Joe Costarella; sister, Charlotte Platenak; two grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

GRACE KEPICS

Sister Grace Kepics of the Hopelawn, New Jersey Branch passed onto her reward on March 30, 2003. She was preceded in death by her brother, Brother Paul Calabro. She is survived by her husband, John Kepics; son, Brother Ronald Kepics; brother, Brother Frank Calabro; sisters, Sister Marge Calabro and Sister Marie Huttenberger, and a host of nieces and nephews.

* WEDDINGS *

Brother David Lopez and Sister Diana Campos were united in holy matrimony in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on June 16, 2002.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Brother Joey Gonzalez was baptized on January 26, 2003 in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch.

Sister Diana Perez Lopez was baptized on March 2, 2003 in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch.

Brother David Scott King was baptized on January 12, 2003 in the Vanderbilt, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Richard Lowther and confirmed by Evangelist Robert D. Nicklow, Jr.

Brother Dan Covalessky was baptized on March 2, 2003 in the Greensburg, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Jason Monaghan and confirmed by Brother Paul Gehly.

Brother Chick Crates was baptized on November 22, 2002 in the Simi Valley, California Branch. He was baptized by Brother Ed Buccellato and Brother Sal Azzinaro and confirmed by Brother Ken Surdock.

Sister LaJuana Burnside was baptized on January 26, 2003 in the Simi Valley, California Branch. She was baptized and confirmed by Brother Sal Azzinaro.

Sister Rosiland Beradino was baptized on August 18, 2002 in the Youngstown, Ohio Branch. She was baptized by Brother Ron Genaro and confirmed by Brother Joe Genaro.

Children Blessed

Gabriel Joseph Catone-Highfield, son of Eugene Highfield, Jr. and Rachel Lynette Catone, was blessed in 2002.

Alexandria Nicole Morales, daughter of Omar and Ashley Morales was blessed on December 15, 2002.

Caroline Elisa DeRoo, daughter of Chris and Rebekah DeRoo was blessed on December 15, 2002.

Gabrielle Adele, daughter of Susan and Greg Hardy was blessed on March 2, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch.

Jack William, son of William and Kim (Purkall) Puchalski was blessed on February 16, 2003 in the Lake Worth, Florida Branch.

Kaytlyn Marian Racz, daughter of Christian and Kim Racz was blessed on February 23, 2003 in the Edison, New Jersey Branch.

Christopher Paul Woerner, son of Paula and Matthew Woerner, was blessed on August 25, 2002 in the Rochester, New York Mission.

Caterina FengLin Scolaro, daughter of Brother Anthony J. and Sister Linda Scolaro, was blessed on September 22, 2002 in the Hopelawn, New Jersey Branch.

Ordinations

Brother Raphael Auguiste was ordained a Teacher in Dominica, West Indies on February 9, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Richard Santilli and he was ordained by Brother Isaac J. Smith.

Sister Helena Auguiste was ordained a Deaconess in Dominica, West Indies on February 9, 2003. Her feet were washed by Sister Annabelle Santilli and she was ordained by Brother Richard Santilli.

Brother Clarence Kirkpatrick, Jr. was ordained a Deacon in Erie, Pennsylvania on August 18, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Harold Burge and he was ordained by Brother Lawrence King.

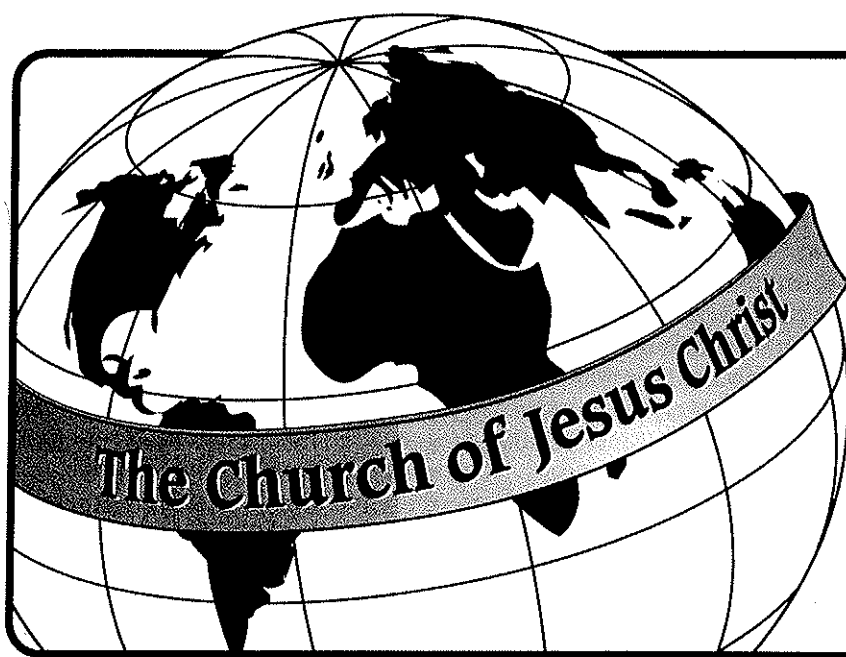
Brother Christopher Gehly was ordained a Deacon in Erie, Pennsylvania on August 18, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Art Gehly and he was ordained by Brother Joel Gehly.

Address Change

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The Gospel News

World Headquarters Monrovia, PA, USA

June, 2003

Volume 59, No. 6

Pleading for the Gospel

By Evangelist Joel Gehly

During the month of March Evangelist John DiBattista and I had an opportunity to visit the country of Malawi (in southeast Africa). It was truly a memorable visit to this poor African country that had never previously experienced the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. I will attempt to share some of our experiences during our very brief visit; however, as I begin, the following scripture was given to me as a summary of the people we met in this beautiful land:

"...do ye not suppose that they are more blessed who truly humble themselves because of the word?" (Alma 32:14).

This scripture came alive and in-focus as we were sitting outside under a large tree. It was mid-afternoon in a remote section of northern Malawi. We were miles from the nearest town, back in the African countryside at the home of Frederick Nyirenda. Brother John and I had spent the entire morning

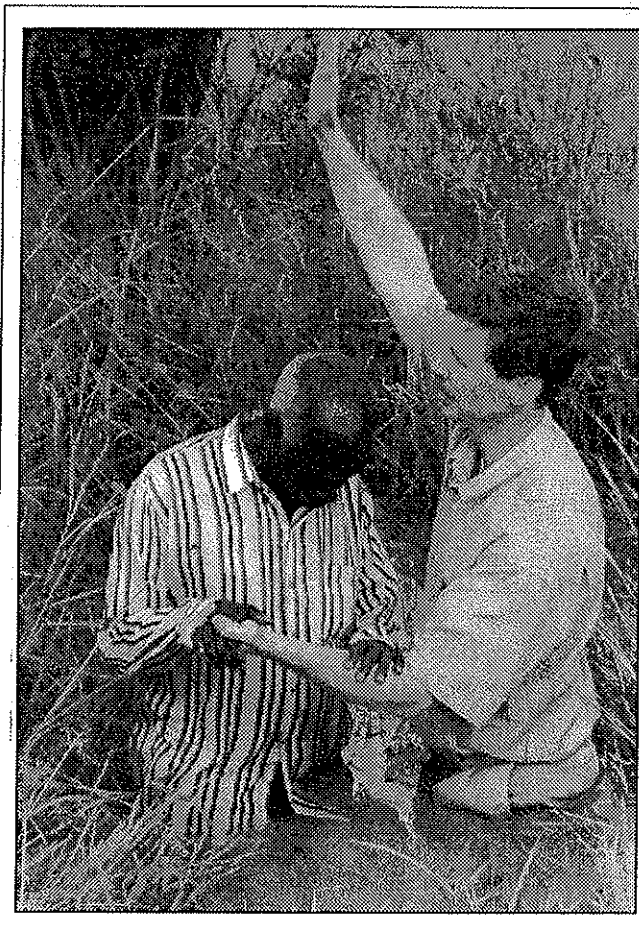
and part of the afternoon speaking, instructing, and answering numerous questions on the scriptures and the operation of the Restored Gospel. Frequently during the day we had

seen the spirit of God touch the heart of this sincere man and we would see a tear running down his cheek as we talked and spoke of the things of God. Finally, he could wait no longer and he

said, "Brothers, over the years there have been many man-made churches come to Malawi, but now, today, the one church made by Jesus Christ is here." He continued, "I understand that your visit must be very short, but what am I to do? I must be baptized."

Oh, at that moment the scripture quoted from Alma was never more vivid or real. Here was a man that was humbled because of the word. He had lived a difficult, and based upon our culture, a very poor life. However, he was humbled because of the word of God and the love of God that had touched him with the truth.

Sometimes the responsibilities of a missionary are difficult. However, this was a time of great joy. Here was a man who obviously had an understanding of the principles of salvation, he had heard the Restored Gospel and



Brother Joel Gehly baptizing Brother Frederick Nyirenda.

(Continued on Page 2)

Pleading for the Gospel

Continued from Page 1

believed the latter day message, and he was demonstrating a humble repentant spirit. Even though we were only in the country for a few days to make an exploratory visit, we felt directed by God's spirit in this man's humble desire. We immediately placed a telephone call to Brother Paul Palmieri, and through a miracle of God we made the connection and received confirmation from our brothers to act as the spirit of God was directing us. As soon as Frederick heard that we would baptize him, he immediately went to the house to change his clothes and go out to find a suitable place to baptize.

At this point, let me back up and

share some of the beginning of this story. Dwein and Sheilla Sibandi from Malawi met the Church in 2000 through the missionary efforts of Sister Meredieth Martin and other saints in South Bend, Indiana. Dwein loved the Church and they attended in South Bend. However, Dwein was very sick and he died in August 2000. Before his death, he had an experience that showed him that it would be Sheilla's family that would eventually accept the Church. After Dwein's death, the saints in South Bend were very loving and supportive of Sheilla. Because of all that transpired, Sheilla told her family in Malawi of the tremendous love of the people of The Church of Jesus Christ. Sheilla's father, Frederick Nyirenda, has waited in anticipation for The Church

of Jesus Christ to come to Malawi since late 2000. One of his first statements to us was, "I have been waiting three years for you to come!"

After a blessed and extremely busy visit with the saints in Kenya, we flew south from Nairobi to Blantyre, Malawi. Once we arrived, we drove seven hours through the country to the small village of Mzimba. This is where we found a people that were not compelled to be humble, but they were humbled by the word of God.

The people we met had previously received a copy of the Book of Mormon, our Church History book, and other church literature. They read, absorbed, and accepted all that they had received. When we began our visit, we gave them six Books of Mormon that we had carried with us.



(Left to Right) Desire Sibandi (Sheilla's son), Sheilla Sibandi, Mrs. Nyirenda (Sheilla's mother), Brother Frederick Nyirenda (Sheilla's father).

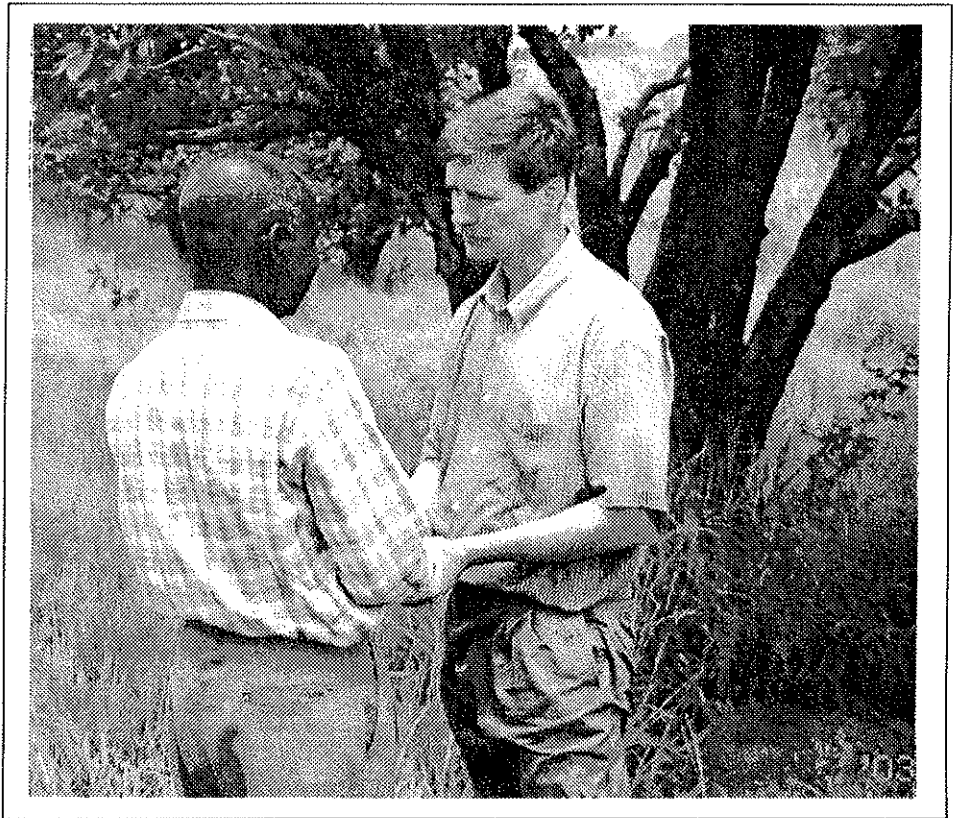
Brother Frederick was overjoyed when he saw the books we brought for them. They told Brother John and I, "We need many copies of this book. There are many people here that need this book."

As we sat and discussed the scriptures, the men that sat with us under that tree would rejoice as we talked and taught from the Book of Mormon. Once during the afternoon, when Brother John and I were somewhat tired and had stopped talking and teaching for a few moments, one of the men said, "This is so wonderful! Please don't stop, teach us more!" Needless to say, with such eagerness and joy in receiving the Gospel, we readily revived our energy and continued our teaching.

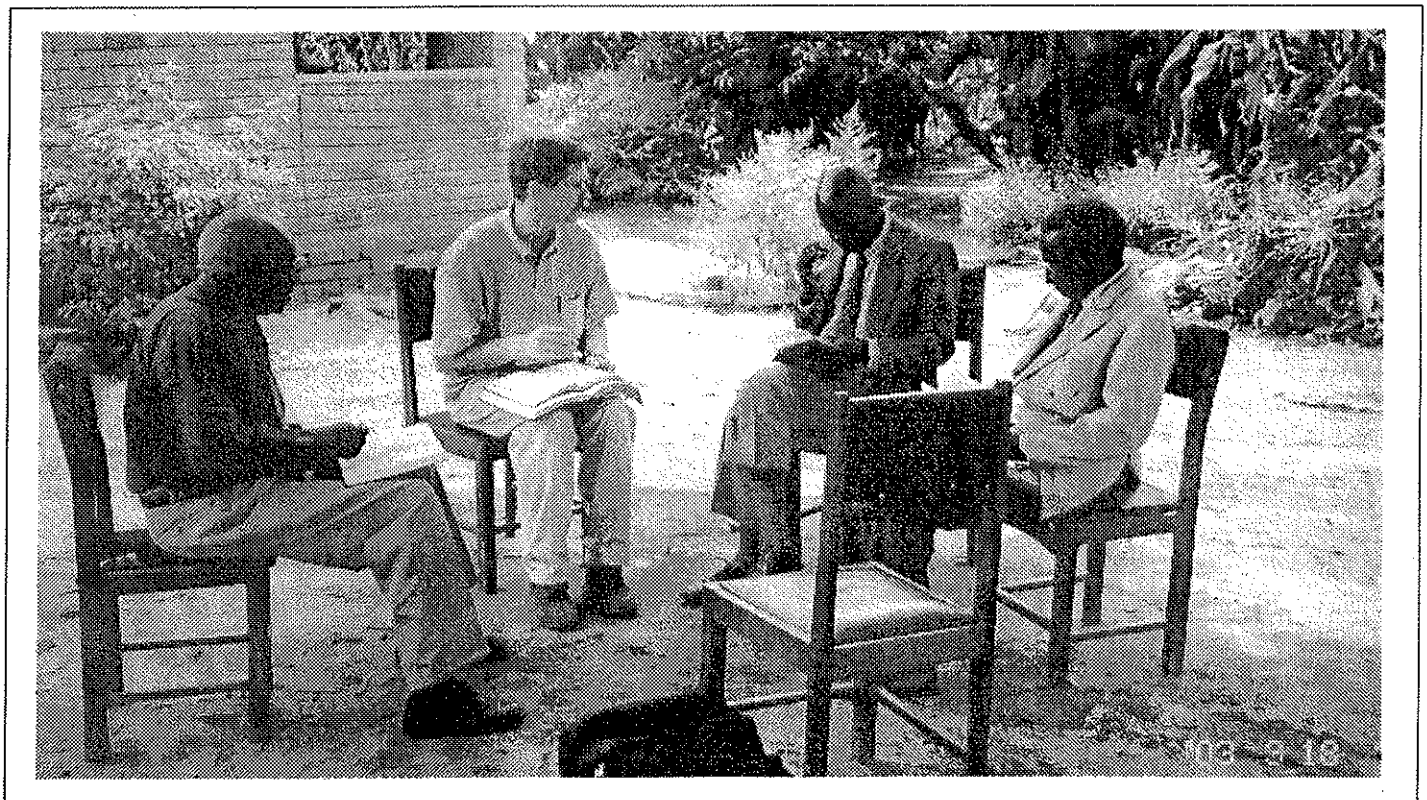
On our third day in Malawi, Frederick Nyirenda and Calvin Gausi

(Text continued on Page 11)

(Pictures continued on Page 4)



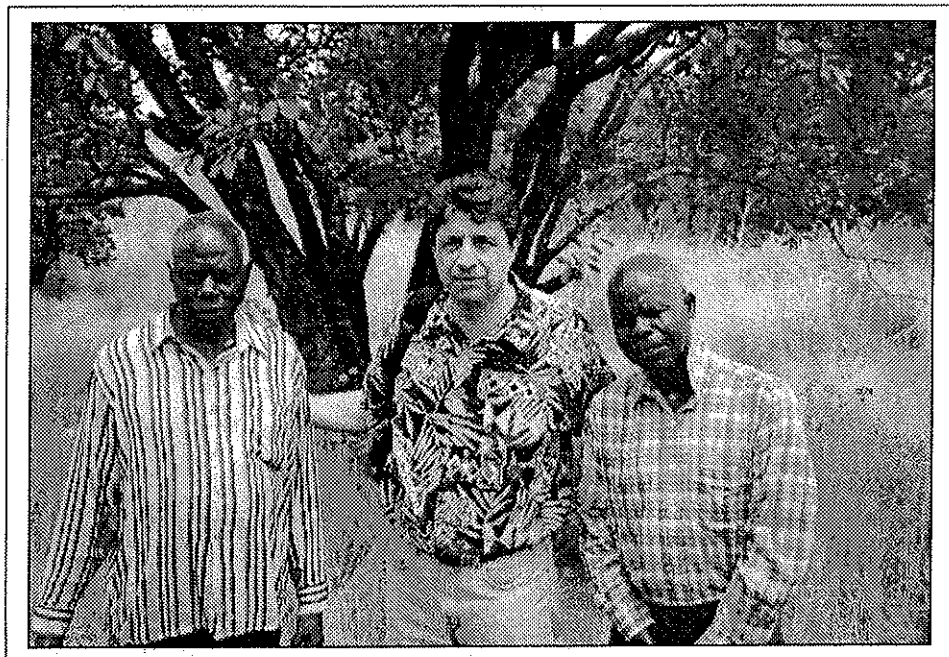
Brother Joel Gehly and Brother Calvin Gausi prior to his baptism.



Teaching the Gospel in Malawi. (Left to Right) Brother Frederick Nyirenda, Brother Joel Gehly, Brother Calvin Gausi, and Ministone Gausi.

Pleading for the Gospel

Continued from Page 3



(Left to Right) Brother Frederick Nyirenda, Brother John DiBattista, and Brother Calvin Gausi at the baptisms.

Mexicali Weekend

By Sister Michelle Huttenberger

On March 15 and 16, 2003, brothers and sisters from the Pacific and Southwest Regions and Tijuana were privileged to travel to the Mexicali Mission and fellowship with the saints there. About a dozen young people from the Phoenix/Mesa Branch as well as brothers and sisters from the Pacific Coast Yucaipa, San Diego, Anaheim and Bell Branches and Tijuana Branch in Mexico came to participate in canvassing the surrounding community nearby the mission, and held Saturday evening and Sunday services with the brothers and sisters in Mexicali.

Saturday afternoon the saints arrived in Mexicali, and after doing some physical labor around the building, they set out with flyers in hand to invite the neighborhood to the church. Four groups, each with a Spanish speaker, canvassed a portion of the community. Last year the saints canvassed areas nearest the church,

so this time they decided to venture out farther into the community and invite people who might be less likely to encounter the church. The saints were delighted to see some visiting faces at the Saturday night and Sunday services. Even some young children from the community visited the church on Sunday morning and participated in Sunday school.

The Saturday evening service was a singing and testimony service, focused on giving praise to God. Brother Rudy Carrillo addressed the saints briefly, encouraging them to never tire of doing the work of the Lord. There were many blessed testimonies and songs.

Sunday morning, Brothers Michael Watson and Jordan Giannetti facilitated a Sunday School class on the subject of following Christ. They focused primarily on the 37th chapter of Alma that outlines the plan of obedience, faith, repentance, baptism and endurance. Brother Rudy Carrillo opened the Sunday service and encouraged the saints to not be discouraged by life's trials but to continue going

forward. God blessed them with a wonderful singing and testimony service.

The saints thank God for His protection while traveling to Mexicali. There were various obstacles set in their way while traveling to the mission, but all arrived safely. God also had His hand upon the weather. Rain was forecasted for most of the weekend, but the saints experienced little or no rain while traveling to the mission or canvassing the neighborhood. It rained through Saturday night, and the sky was clear and sunny on Sunday morning. The brothers and sisters thank God that He kept them safe and dry during their trip. In all, the saints were blessed to share the weekend with their brothers and sisters in Mexicali.

Notice

El Libro de Mormon

The Americas Missionary Operating Committee and South America Sector are pleased to announce the pending publication of The Book of Mormon, **El Libro de Mormon**, in the Spanish language. Plans are underway to have **El Libro de Mormon** printed sometime this summer. It is sorely needed in the Spanish speaking mission fields. It will bear the name of The Church of Jesus Christ. It will be our own!

The publication of The Book of Mormon in the Spanish language will be a blessing to The Church of Jesus Christ, its many Spanish members, their families and friends. This will also be a blessing to the many mission fields and works in Mexico, Central America and South America.

It will come with an index and references. Tentative plans are being made to have it published in hard cover, paperback and hopefully, bonded leather or bonded cloth. It will be published by the Print House. This represents a significant milestone and undertaking by The Church of Jesus Christ. As soon as it is available, an announcement will be made in the *Gospel News*.



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fullness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire" (1st Nephi 22:17).

This wonderful promise was made to the righteous by God through Nephi as he prophesied about our day. In this chapter, Nephi speaks regarding the establishment of a mighty nation (the United States) that would scatter Israel (American Indian), but that God would do a marvelous work amongst the people of the United States (or the Gentile majority). This marvelous work began the day The Church of Jesus Christ was restored, and a record of the American Indian (seed of Joseph) sprang forth from the earth. This record is of great worth to all of mankind, but in particular, to the seed of Joseph because it explains their role in God's plan in these last days. Nephi also predicts how the great and abominable church, and all those who fight against the Gospel and against Zion (the gathering and enlightenment for the seed of Joseph and all the other tribes of Israel who God promised would be gathered in the last days) would be destroyed. Nephi explains how God will make bare His arm in the eyes of the nation, and His wrath would be unleashed upon the wicked. Yet, He promised the righteous have NO NEED to fear.

Throughout the ages of time, God spared His people when His wrath was unleashed. This is not a new concept. Remember Noah and his family? Or, Lot and his family? What about the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea and escaping the wrath of God upon the Egyptians? Israel was spared the wrath of the "death angel" upon Egypt by putting the blood of the Lamb upon their doorpost, thus waiving the death angel over. What about the great destruction upon this land at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus? The more righteous were spared.

Is God any different today? God is unchanging and will save His people from generation to generation. Destruction upon this land is inevitable. In just a short amount of time, wickedness upon this land has multiplied exponentially. Just turn on your television. It looks much different than it did just 20 years ago! Although there have been humbling events like 9/11 when many turned to God, it seemed to wear off as the months progressed afterwards. Although God is still allowing our nation to have victory in natural wars, the greater war is occurring upon our soil. It is the spiritual war against sin. Sooner or later, God will intervene in this more important war, but the outcome will be far different than the natural wars our nation has fought throughout time. The Book of Mormon states that when this land is ripe in iniquity, the wicked will be swept off. When this war against sin will end, the righteous, not the politicians, will be victorious. This chapter mentions that Satan will be bound for a long time by the righteousness of the saints. It will be a day of victory for the righteous.

Brothers, sisters and friends, these events are already happening, and the fullness of these prophecies are not far away. We have NO NEED to fear, because God will be our Commander-in-Chief when that day comes. Who can stand against our God? Remember how God consumed the sacrifice that the prophets of Baal made with fire? There is no wickedness that can stand when "the flood waters rise." There is only one thing we should fear . . . that we would displease God. Let's live each day pleasing our Master and trusting in His all-powerful protection that will carry us all to that day of victory. This is the beauty and peace we have cherished since knowing the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. Live confidently, despite the frightening events that may come, because God will protect us, even if it be by fire!

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork



The Lamanites Walk in Righteousness

Dear Girls and Boys,

Many years after the first Lehi and his sons Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi came to the land of the Americas, a good man called Helaman named his two sons Nephi and Lehi.

At this time the descendants of these first groups had grown into a large number of people, covering what is today South and Central America. Originally the Nephite people had kept the brass plates of Laban which had told them their laws. For several hundred years the Nephites had been a godly people. Now things were changed and the number of people who chose evil outnumbered the people choosing good. The laws were corrupted.

Nephi was a grown man and chief judge over all the Nephite people, but he was growing weary because of the hard-hearted evil ways of his people. So Nephi gave up being chief judge and took it upon himself to preach the word of God all the remainder of his days. His brother Lehi also believed in serving God and joined his brother.

God gave them great power and authority. They preached to many Nephites who repented and then they went among the Lamanites. The Lord gave them His power and authority and also gave them the words to speak. The Lamanites were astonished to hear their words and learn the true story of how Laman and Lemuel went against God. Eight thousand of them were convinced of the wickedness of the traditions of their ancestors and were baptized.

Many of the Lamanite rulers

were upset to see their people change. They sent an army to take Nephi and Lehi and threw them in prison.

After several days without food, Nephi and Lehi heard their enemies coming. The Lamanites planned to kill these two good men. But when they opened the doors they saw Nephi and Lehi standing with fire circling around them and they were afraid. As they stood there dumbfounded, Nephi and Lehi began to speak to them.

"Fear not," they said, "for God has shown you this marvelous thing, that you cannot kill us!" And when they said this the walls of the prison began to shake and a cloud of darkness came upon the people and they felt a terrible fear.

A voice of perfect mildness spoke that pierced them to the soul and said, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and stop trying to kill my servants." The Lamanites wanted to flee but they couldn't because of the fear and darkness that had come upon them.

When the multitude looked at Nephi and Lehi, they saw that they were looking up to heaven and their faces shone brightly. One prisoner named Aminadab told them, "They are talking with the angels of God!"

The Lamanites said to Aminadab, "What shall we do, that this cloud of darkness will be taken away?"

Aminadab told them, "Repent, say you are sorry—cry out to the voice to forgive you and hear you because that is the voice of Christ."

So they all began to cry to the voice which had shaken the earth, and the cloud of darkness began to go away. And when they looked up from

their praying, each and every one of them was circled around with a pillar of fire. And Nephi and Lehi were in the middle of them, yet the fire did not burn them or the prison and they were filled with unspeakable joy. Behold, the Holy Spirit of God came down from heaven and entered their hearts and they could speak forth marvelous words.

And it came to pass that they heard a voice saying, "Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith in Jesus."

When they heard this they looked up to see where the voice came from and behold, they saw the heavens open; and angels came down to be with them.

There were about three hundred souls who saw and heard these things

(Continued on Page 11)

WORD SEARCH

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Missionary
Benevolent
Association

Praising God in Song

By Sister Lynne Nieves

On Sunday March 23, 2003, the Great Lakes Area MBA held a Singspiration at the Detroit Inner City Branch. The new building was filled with members from several branches within the region.

After some energetic congregational singing, which surely invited the Spirit of the Lord to join us, Brother David Lovalvo, Area President, welcomed the brothers, sisters and friends. He encouraged us all to make this a time of praise to God. Brother Duane Lovalvo offered the opening prayer asking God to accept our voices in praise and glory to His name.

Brother Larry Champine spoke to us for a few moments and reminded us of the importance of taking the time to thank and praise God, not only on special occasions, but every day of our lives.

"...bring every instrument of praise, and they'll be singing on the

mountain such as never has been heard." I know that we could be heard from the mountains and from the angels in heaven, as the piano, guitars, and flute were played with full purpose of heart to honor and glorify the Lord. We honored him not only with our voices and instruments, we honored Him most importantly in our hearts.

After the Champine brothers sang, *He's Taken My Blindness*, the congregation followed with *God's Still on His Throne*, and there was no doubt all believed what we were singing. We then sang a Spanish hymn, *En La Viña Del Señor*, which talks about the desire to work in the vineyard of the Lord and the desire was renewed to follow the songs request from all those who were present.

Brother Larry Champine invited all the brothers and sisters that had been in The Church of Jesus Christ for 25 years or more to come forward. They appropriately sang *Sweeter as the Years Go By*. Brother Larry then thanked them for their many years of service and shared gratitude towards them for the examples that they have set for those of us who have not yet reached that milestone.

The 14-25 year-old age group also presented us with a song, *He Planted Me Deep*. How wonderful to

look upon the 29 young people, most baptized, and see the future leaders of the Church so sweetly singing this meaningful song.

Several young people then took the opportunity to bear their testimony of God's wondrous grace and daily direction in their lives.

Five brothers from the Inner City than sang two songs, one written by Brother Gary Champine called *We Are Soldiers Again*, and the second called *Ye Are the Fair Sons and Daughters of Zion*. The second song was written by all five brothers. Each of them was inspired with a different portion of the song. The melody and sincerity in the singing of these songs surely reached the throne of God.

The congregation sang a few more selections and then Brother Ryan Lesperance, Area Vice President, thanked everyone for coming and for the privilege of being counted amongst the saints praising God.

While we closed our meeting by singing *We're Marching to Zion*, my entire being was consumed with the scripture in I Nephi 13:37 which reads, "*And Blessed are they who seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost.*" Amen and Amen.

Southeast Region Conference

By Sister Kenah Nowels

The conference at Mid-Georgia was anticipated and greatly prayed for as we united on February 15, 2003. The Brothers attended to the business in the early part of the day. We then gathered in the evening to greet the Lord with joy in our hearts. Brother Ron Morle, the Region second counselor opened with a few remarks concerning the business of the day and welcomed the congregation to Mid-Georgia for the first time in conference. We also would like to mention that we had the company of two of our three Region Apostles, Brother Isaac

Smith and Brother Peter Scolaro. Thank you brothers for your support. Brother Paul Benyola was retained in New Jersey because of the weather. (History will note that New Jersey was hit with one of the worst blizzards it has ever seen.)

During the weekend, we were happy to host our General Church CFO, Brother Randy Ciccatti. Brother Randy joined us all the way from St. Cloud, Minnesota. He delivered quite a remarkable slide presentation about a couple of the church's financial programs for saving and investing in the church building fund. Much helpful information was taken from this presentation for all the branches and missions in the Southeast Region. We thank you again Brother Randy for your hard work and diligence in

making the effort to show the Southeast Region these programs.

After the slide presentation, the Mid-Georgia Mission presented the congregation with a program simply entitled "The Hope of Zion". There were many scriptures read from the Book of Mormon and wonderful favorite hymns sung about the hope we have of the coming of Zion.

Sisters (natural and spiritual) Carolyn and Marilyn graced us with a selection. What a joy to see these two sisters sing together, even after being so far apart. Brother Sam Risola made a few announcements, then the Saturday evening meeting was closed. We were anticipating a beautiful service on Sunday.

(Continued on Page 11)



Branch and Mission News

The Mercies of God

By Sister Rose Palacios

In the Lorain Branch, many things have transpired this past year of 2002. First of all, we thank God for being with His people and we pray that He will never leave us. As we see many things happening out in this world, we know that security is only in Him and we have to trust only in His word and His promises. We know that God has blessed His people throughout the Church.

Our fasting and prayer meetings which we have held every week since 1972 have brought many results and we would like to share some of these experiences, not for an individual's glory, but to uplift each other and to the honor and glory of the God of Israel.

In one of our Sunday meetings, Brother Frank Palacios asked, "Do we want the blessings to continue from last year and how God blessed our people of old. If we do, then we have to serve God like they did and keep God's commandments." Testimonies were given and a sister said that one day a man came to her door. When she went to the door, she thought he needed money. She returned with money to give to him and he held her hand and gave her a kiss on her forehead and said to her, "This home will never be in want." He then went down two steps and went to the corner of the house. She did not see him anymore. She went out the door and looked to see where he was heading, and he was nowhere to be seen. As she said this in her testimony, the spirit spoke "I was with my people of old and I will continue to be with them today. Trust me and I will provide for you also."

Sister Michelle Bowens said that her doctor found a mass on her body. She was anointed before she was to go for a cat scan. She returned to

church with a good report. Thank God.

Sister Kristy Johnson said she was grateful because God touched her daughter, Doris, to visit her. While Doris was there, Sister Kristy's clothes caught fire. Her daughter was able to help her put it out or Sister Kristy could have been badly burned. We thank God for this.

Sister Katherine Cocco had gone to the store to make copies of her passports and other documents for an upcoming trip to Italy. A few hours after returning home, she realized she had left all of her documents at the store. She hurried back to the store and to her surprise, every document was right where she had left them. There were many people going and coming from the store, but her papers were not touched. How Great God Is! What a blessing!

In another Sunday service, Brother Tony Calabrese asked the congregation to sing *Does Jesus Care* before the anointings. At that time, the spirit spoke, "I care! saith the Lord. I care. Trust me and I will help you. Believe and have faith in me!"

During one of our feet washing services, the spirit spoke, "Lean upon me. I love what you are doing this day. Love one another in spirit and in truth."

Brother Tony Calabrese gave an experience of A.J., his 3-1/2 year old grandson. A.J.'s parents, Brother Anthony and Sister Kelly, had taken A.J. to the hospital for an injury he had sustained. While there, A.J. kept saying, "Oil! Oil!" His parents couldn't make out what he was saying. They thought he wanted an "Oreo" cookie. After a short time, they realized he was saying "Holy Oil." Thank God for the teachings our little ones see in Sunday School, MBA, and at home. They do not forget what they hear or see.

Brother Frank Palacios told of what God had done for his granddaughter, Gia, in Kentucky. Brother Dan and Sister Tina's daughter was choking on a piece of meat. Brother Dan took her in his arms and he called on God to help him as he tried to take it out, but could not. All of a sudden,

he looked down at Gia and she said, "Daddy! Jesus took it out!" Tears filled Brother Dan's eyes knowing God had come to his aid once again. He traced back his footsteps to see if he could find the piece of meat but found nothing. The spirit spoke and told him that if he continues to serve Him that God would do more for him. (As a side note, around this same time a little girl who was Gia's age almost died while choking on meat.) All we can say is, "Blessed be the name of God." One Sunday, all of our elders gave encouraging words to the congregation because of the sicknesses many were going through. They reminded us that the devil is not sleeping but God comes and comforts His people. At this time, the spirit spoke "If my people trust me today, I will be with them. I will help them and carry them in my arms, saith God."

In a feet washing service, we could feel the spirit of God in our midst beginning with Sunday School, the preaching service and the testimony services. As we began to wash each other's feet, the Lord spoke, "My people! My people! Hold the fort. I will bless you. Have no fear. I will be with you."

In July, Brother Joe and Sister Vickie Calabrese were in our midst for a Wednesday service. He spoke encouraging words and spoke of the blessings they received at GMBA Campout and the Indian Conference in Muncey. At the conference, a vision was had where a sister saw a man leading a group of people. She did not know who this man was until a brother was praying and he mentioned the Choice Seer. As Brother Joe related this, the spirit spoke, "It is coming. It is coming. Saith the Lord. I will do my work, my work."

During a Sunday testimony meeting, a sister was saying there is nothing God would not do for his people. The spirit spoke, "And I will be there for you. I love you my children." Brother Sam Altomare said that when the Lord spoke, he saw a light outline the sister as she spoke God's word. He rubbed his eyes and looked again and this time he saw a white figure standing next to the sister.

We also thank God for his goodness to Brother David Calabrese. He had not heard from his daughter, Rosie, in over 10 years. She had recently married and felt to call her father. He was very happy and excited to hear from her and we thank God for another answered prayer.

In the summer, Sister Betty Alessio received a report from the doctor that concerned her. She was to see the doctor for her test results and requested prayer. The spirit spoke to her, *"Trust me and I will show you my power."* The results showed that all was well with her.

Sister Aileen Calabrese was going to see the doctor for a biopsy. The spirit spoke to her, *"If you trust and have faith, I will take care of you."* At our Wednesday service, Brother Tony gave a good report on Sister Aileen's tests.

Brother Robert Gonzales had gone to his sister's home (Brother Frank and Sister Rose) to fix a light fixture. As they always do, prayer was given before work began. As Brother Robert began to fix the light, he thought Brother Frank had turned off the circuit breaker so no juice would be going through while Brother Robert worked on the light. When he finished the work, Brother Frank turned on the light switch. He and Brother Robert just looked at each other because they realized that Brother Frank had NOT turned off the circuit and Brother Robert was working with live wires. We thank God for His mercies.

Sister Mary Altomare's daughter, Cindy and her husband John Hogue have been attending church for over a year now, along with their own daughter, Crystal and her husband Art Williams. Shortly after Crystal and Art's daughter, Destiny, was born she was hospitalized for a lump on her head. She was anointed and the lump was gone. Destiny then developed bronchitis and was told she would leave the hospital in 2-4 days. After being anointed Destiny came home the next day. A few months later, Destiny and her father Art had to go for some testing and the results came back

negative. The evil one is determined to bring them down but we are very determined also because the victory is in God if we continue to fast and pray. Also, John Hogue is going through a trial now. He has been diagnosed with cancer and has been undergoing chemotherapy for almost a year now. He continues to put his trust in the Lord and continues to attend church, where he says, he finds his strength. Please remember him and many others that need prayer throughout the Church.

During the summer, Brother Mark Naro was in the hospital on four different occasions. He had his gall bladder removed and still the problem continued. At one point, the doctor thought it was his pancreas. But a cyst was located in Brother Mark's small bowel. Doctors performed a biopsy and found a small mass benign. Surgery was required to remove it. He was sent to the Cleveland Clinic for surgery. Brother Frank drove Sister Carey Beth to the Clinic. The morning before they left, Sister Rose told them a dream she had where two men, dressed like doctors, were around Brother Mark's bed. One of them reached inside of Brother Mark with an instrument and pulled something out of his stomach and it burst. This is what happened later that day to Brother Mark. The doctors repeated the biopsy on the cyst and the cyst burst. While Brother Frank was waiting in the hospital lobby, he was telling a man and his daughter about the Church and our beliefs. He told them about Brother Mark and the dream Sister Rose had. At that time, Brother Mark's daughter came to Brother Frank and told him that the cyst burst. This man and his daughter immediately told Brother Frank, "Isn't that what happened in the dream?" They thanked God also for what they had heard.

We never know how we can share our testimony with someone and make an impact with them. Brothers and sisters, each one of you, remember our service men and women and our great nation in your prayers.

Lake Worth

By Sister Josie Jasmin

On March 23rd, our service was opened by our visiting elder, Brother Ron Carradi. Brother Ron used as his text Romans Chapter 13 Verses 11-12, the subject being "Time." "God set in order all things; man is the one who scrambles things. We all think we have so much time to serve the Lord, but time is running out. Are we ready for the battle today? Are we ready to stand for the Lord? We have chosen to be in the army of God. Are we ready? We must wave the flags of Zion now, this is the time. We need to be ready and wave the flag high for all to see. Stand up with our banner in honor and glory to God."

Brother Ron posed the question, "Is this the time? We need to be prepared to march into Zion. We cannot shrug our duty. Everyone needs to awake from sleeping and be strong in our faith. Many faithful men and woman are recorded in the scriptures. They remained faithful through all things that came their way. This is the Gospel that will reclaim Israel. This is the army to be in, the battle is at hand. We need to proclaim the Restoration to the world."

Brother Gene Perri continued on the same theme and invited all in the words of Christ to *"Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest."* "We need to come to Jesus now; do not waste the days of your probation. In many areas of the scriptures there is the invitation to come and rest from the cares of life. The blessings are immense when we go towards the Lord." We were reminded that, "The Lord is our Shepherd," and that His word has become a Lamp unto our feet and a Light unto our pathway.

"God made mankind, of all colors, red, yellow, black and white, and the Gospel is open to receive all people to serve God. We will leave all of this world's goods behind; only the Love of God will go with us when we leave this world. The Church is not the place for

(Continued on Page 10)

Lake Worth

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retirement; it is the place for workers in Christ's Kingdom. The Gospel gives us rest and peace from the cares of the world, but we are laborers for Zion. Let everyone pull together for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Proclaim it to everyone you know!"

On Sunday March 30th we were visited by Brother Chuck Maddox and his family from Ohio. Brother Chuck opened our service and stated how to him this day was like unto a reunion or mini-conference, since there were many visitors. They were from Hollywood, the Treasure Coast, the Florida Keys and Michigan.

Brother Chuck exhorted unto us to serve God to our fullest degree. "We need to bloom and blossom in the Gospel." Brother Chuck read from Exodus Chapter 14 Verse 13 *"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today."* "Israel was in a dilemma and they were feeling overcome. With all the help they received from God they always seemed to want to give up. They saw many things, such as the Red Sea open up, the Cloud of Fire to guide them, the manna prepared for them, the waters made sweet, and they still complained. We need to 'Rejoice in the Lord Always!' God is in control; He never leaves us alone, Praise His name! We need to remember to be still and let God do His work in us. Stay focused on Jesus Christ, look past the situation that we find ourselves in, opposition will always be there, just keep your eyes on Jesus."

Brother Chuck read Galatians Chapter 6 Verse 9, *"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."* "Here is a bit of advice...If you want a Hug from God, just take one step towards Him."

On April 6th we had visitors from Michigan, Brother Sam and Sister Judy Impastato. It gives our hearts so much joy to see all of our visiting brothers and sisters in our midst from time to time.

Our Presiding Elder, Brother Gene Perri opened the service today

and exhorted to us the beautiful Word of God—good spiritual food for our souls. Brother Gene's theme was, "Prepare for Eternity, Be Ready." Few and scattered are God's people, but we will spread the Gospel throughout this world.

Brother Gene read from Alma Chapter 37 Verses 38-47, concerning the ball and director and the marvelous words of the Lord. "The Lord prepared this director so the people would have His instructions to lead their way. The words of Christ are like unto a compass, we need to know how to use the compass well. The spirit of God keeps us on course. If we follow the direction of the spirit of God we find our way to salvation. All mankind must repent and be baptized. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess His holy name."

Brother Gene concluded by reading the 37th verse, *"Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day."*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, for another glorious day in the house of the Lord.

Quincy, Florida

On Saturday, March 15, 2003, the Quincy, Florida Mission had a "Let Grow Outreach Community Picnic" in an effort to help the young people in the Church and reach out to the community. We hope and pray that some of the hearts of the people will be touched. There were approximately 25 visitors, some who had visited the branch several times.

Brother Horace and Brother Charles have been talking about unity and fellowship and we are trying to do things that will bring about these desires. We will be having quarterly picnics inviting the community. Some of the people who were at the picnic

came to our Sunday meeting.

On Sunday, March 16, 2003, Brother Horace opened the meeting, reading 45:1-5. He said, "God moves in a mysterious way. Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life."

Brother Charles followed exhorting the saints to remember the Lord has answers for everything that happens in our lives. He said all things happen for the good of those who love and serve the Lord.

HAVE MIRACLES CEASED?

Brother Horace and Brother Charles had many requests for anointing. As they were anointing, Brother Horace noticed the oil bottle was almost empty and it was very difficult to get oil out of the bottle. After everyone was anointed, Brother Horace put the oil back on the podium. As he was getting prepared to serve the communion, he noticed the bottle was filled with oil. Brother Horace exclaimed to the congregation, "Behold a miracle of the Lord; the oil bottle was empty, but now it is filled." On Wednesday night, one of the visitors came back and we were talking about the miracle. She said she was wondering what the brothers were going to do for oil because the bottle was empty. The saints in Quincy were strengthened from this experience, for we know it pleases God when we fellowship and tell others of His great love and mercy.

Note of Thanks

I would like to thank all the brothers and sisters for their many prayers on my behalf during my recent stroke. Also thank you for the thoughtful and loving calls, cards and visits. May God bless each and every one of you.

Love in Christ,
Brother Al Coppa

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Pleading for the Gospel

Continued from Page 3

became the first baptized members of The Church of Jesus Christ in Malawi. We confirmed our new brothers and then shared communion together. The kingdom of God had taken hold in a new area of the world. After communion, our new brothers shared their testimonies with us. What joy and what humble rejoicing we heard as they told of their love for Jesus Christ. Later, as we reluctantly said our farewell's, our new brothers exhorted us, "You must send missionaries back here soon! There is much work to do. There are many that are ready for the Gospel. We are ready to work for the Lord!"

Many throughout the world are spiritually dying. Many people in this world are **now** pleading for the Gospel. Do all that you can for the cause of Jesus Christ. Support the missionary work of The Church of Jesus Christ.

Southeast Region Conference

Continued from Page 7

Sunday morning came none too soon for the saints. After much anticipation, we started beckoning the Spirit of God to join our service with what I like to call Mighty Song. As Brother Rusty Nowels was absent from the program Saturday evening and was supposed to play the harmonica during the final song, Brother Sam Risola put him and the Mid-Georgia Mission on the spot for another selection to include the harmonica this time. Does anyone know of another accomplished harmonica player in the Church? (Hint: He's in a Quorum.)

As the service was opened, Brother Peter Scolaro addressed the congregation on keeping a focus on those things in the distance—not too close, because we lose sight of the end picture. He likened our Spiritual life like driving a car. "If we stay focused on the front of the car and not the road ahead, we tend to drive

erratically and not smoothly." As he was relaying this message, the spirit spoke to us saying, "Fear not! You are on the threshold of a great event." Brother Randy Ciccatti again addressed us continuing on the subject of stay the course and keep focused but we must turn the control of our Spiritual lives (and natural) over to God. Believe the promise of a chosen people, in a chosen church, in a chosen land.

Apostle Ike Smith followed about learning to read the map and learning to understand directions. Evangelist, Miguel Bicelis followed Brother Ike by adding, "It is a privilege to be chosen, in the chosen and of the chosen. Others need to see God in us in our daily walk. It is our responsibility."

Brother Al Tepperman, joining us from New Brunswick, New Jersey, sang *What a Day That Will Be*. Brother George Kovacic spoke to us on the blessing of being the people of God. He gave a stirring analogy of Nephi's vision. As it has been our wish for many years past to have communion during conference, we are grateful to the Southeast Region of officers for allowing us to hold a second meeting in Mid-Georgia to partake of communion. We are also pleased to announce that if the Spirit is willing and able, we will have communion together during our next Conference in Lake Worth, Florida on August 16th and 17th. We look forward to seeing you there and may God be with you till we meet again.

The Children's Corner

Continued from Page 6

and they were told to go forth and tell what they had seen until the larger part of the Lamanites were convinced of the greatness of God. Now the Lamanite people became for the most part a righteous nation while the Nephites were becoming more wicked every day.

Sincerely,
Sister Jan

*** WEDDINGS ***

Sister Tracy Francione and Alfred Joseph Cuerrier were united in holy matrimony at the Redford, Michigan Branch on October 19, 2002.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sis. Margie Nolfi of the Forest Hills, Holiday, Florida Branch was reinstated on March 30, 2003. She was reinstated by Brother Scott Griffith.

Sister Rita Ross of the Freehold, New Jersey Branch was reinstated on April 20, 2003. She was reinstated by Brother Joseph Perri.

Ordinations

Brother Brad Labute was ordained a Teacher in the Windsor, Ontario, Canada Branch on December 8, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Perry Vitto and he was ordained by Brother John Collison.

Brother Joseph Donkin was ordained a Deacon in the Glassport, Pennsylvania Branch on March 30, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Keith Donkin and he was ordained by Brother Tony Ricci.

Sister Maryanne Donkin was ordained a Deaconess in the Glassport, Pennsylvania Branch on March 30, 2003. Her feet were washed by Sister Elsie Ensana and she was ordained by Brother Ed Donkin.

Address Change

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to those that mourn the loss of loved ones. May God bless and comfort you.

JEWEL ELIZABETH BALDWIN

Sister Jewel Elizabeth Baldwin of the Lake Worth, Florida Branch passed on to her reward on March 29th 2003. She was an ordained Deaconess in The Church of Jesus Christ. She is survived by her husband, Brother Keith Barnard Baldwin; a son, Roy; a daughter, Sarah; four grandchildren; her mother, Willie May Dorsey; stepfather, Earnest Dorsey; grandmother, Vera May MacCloud; seven brothers, three brothers-in-law, two sisters-in-law, three uncles, three aunts, and a host of nephews, nieces and cousins.

PHILOMENA (PALMIERI) DELUCA

Sister Philomena (Palmieri) DeLuca, of the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to her reward on March 12, 2003. She is survived by her husband, Dave; two sons and their wives, David and Lori, Louis and Suzanne; two brothers, Sela and Paul and his wife Eleanor; and two grandchildren, Jenna and Jared. In addition, she is survived by two sisters-in-law, Sue Breschayko and Jenny Ross and her husband Lou; as well as a brother-in-law, Anthony D'Antonio.

JUANITA ROGOLINO

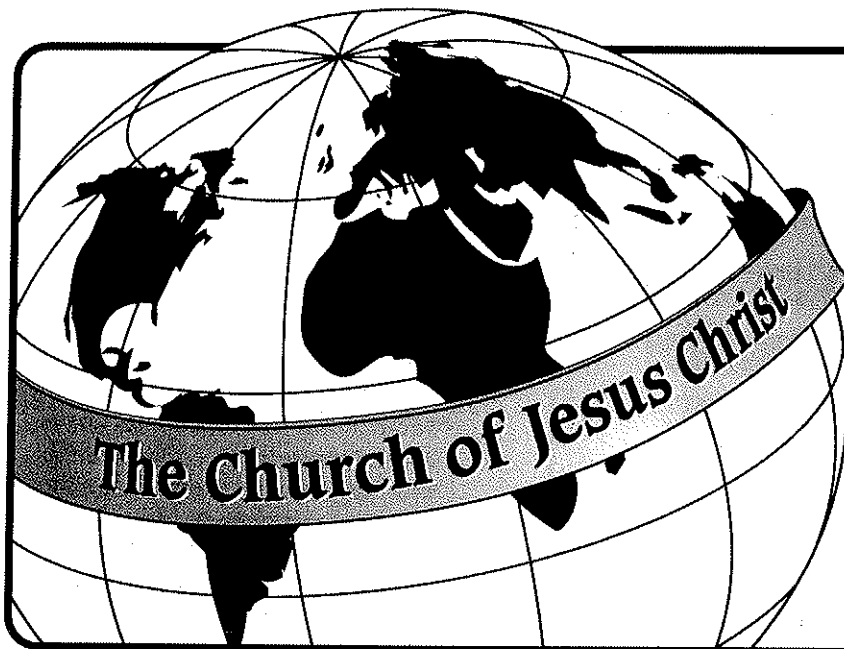
Sister Juanita Rogolino, an ordained Deaconess in the Fort Pierce, Florida Branch passed on to her reward on April 17, 2003. She is survived by her husband, Brother Frank Rogolino; three daughters, Sister Debbie Fisher, Karen Selack, and Linda Evans; two sons, Brother Mark Rogolino and David Rogolino, thirteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

ANNA PAPE

Sister Anna Pape of the Glassport, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to her reward on January 22, 2003. She is survived by her daughters, Sister Linda Ottavian and June Best; her son, Wallace; five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Correction

In the Obituary section of the May, 2003 issue of the *Gospel News*, Brother Samuel Costarella's name was misprinted as William. Our apologies to the family for this error.



The Gospel News

World Headquarters: Monongahela, PA, USA

July, 2003

Volume 59, No. 7

Our Trip to Dominica

By Evangelist Richard Santilli

The work in Dominica is progressing well. When we look back eight years ago, there was only a hope for a work developing here. The Lord did His work in promoting it spiritually and naturally. Over the years, we have held meetings with the Carib Indians in their homes. Visits with Brothers Paul A. Palmieri, Isaac J. Smith, me and our wives who have traveled there have helped the work to progress. In time, other brothers and sisters came into the work and the result was five baptisms.

The Carib Reserve did not have a bridge across the river for access, and there was no road and no church building. Today we have all of those conveniences. The Lord truly blessed the Carib Indians; the seed of Joseph.

On February 6, 2003, Brother Isaac J. Smith and his wife, Sister Sandy, along with my wife, Sister Annabel, and I left the Tampa, Florida airport for Dominica. We arrived there late in the afternoon. The next day we visited Carib families and held meetings with them.

We also spent time teaching Brother Raphael and Sister Helena and the other members regarding the ordinances. There were a number of dreams related to ordaining Brother

Raphael a Teacher and Sister Helena a Deaconess. We talked to them to see whether they would accept the offices, and they cried and said, "Yes!"

Brothers Raphael and Isaac worked on the church building, relocating the bathroom and making the meeting space much larger. We visited the Carib Council office and borrowed chairs for the Sunday meeting.

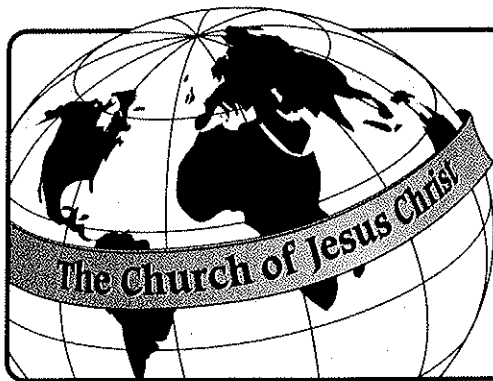
We gathered together in church with about 40 people, including children, in attendance. In the service, we ordained Brother Raphael and Sister Helena. A baby was blessed as well. When we asked whether there was anyone who wished to be anointed for sickness, about 15 people came forth. The blessings of God were manifested.

After our service, we went to Brother Raphael and Sister Helena's home to have pizza, hot dogs, cookies and pop. In the afternoon, we met for feet washing. This was the first time for this ordinance for the members in Dominica.

We felt the blessings of God in performing His work on this isle of the sea. May the Lord bless the missionary work throughout the world. God bless you all.



Brother Raphael and Sister Helena
Auguste



A message from the Seventy

A Visit To Guatemala

By Brother Chatman K. Young

On 20 February 2003, I had the wonderful privilege of visiting the Saints in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Brothers Luis Marroquin and Dennis Moraco met me at the airport, and right away, I could feel the Spirit of brotherhood as we made our way to Brother Luis' home.

Upon entering their home, Sister Darlene greeted me as if I were a long lost brother. The home of our brother and sister was filled with warmth, love, and sharing, as they made me feel welcomed in giving me free rein of their abode, stating, "Brother Chat, you are at home." We started off the following day with prayer at the church building and then proceeded to visit members of the church in their homes, having prayers that God would continue to provide for their needs and bless them as they hold onto the word of God.

A Friday evening meeting was held at the church. Brothers Luis, Dennis and I met with the brothers upstairs, discussing the roles and responsibilities of brothers in various aspects of life and what the Lord requires of us. Sister Darlene led discussions with our sisters in the main sanctuary. I must say that I enjoyed the input of our brothers on our subject matter. As we reassembled in the main sanctuary, Sister Darlene had just concluded her meeting with the sisters. As we took our seats, I noticed the word "Actitude" written on the board, which translated into English means

"Attitude." I pondered for a moment on the attitude of the saints. I considered the topics our brothers had discussed, which had a great deal to do with our attitude toward our roles and responsibilities as saints; for surely, what we do as fathers, brothers, and family members impacts our children's views toward the Church and also influences their actions in society.

Before Brother Luis dismissed the meeting, Brother Dennis assigned the young brothers and sisters homework for our Saturday night meeting. Their assignment was to

bring in four questions each to pose to the elders. We really looked forward to meeting with our brothers and sisters the following evening.

The plan for Saturday morning was to visit with a brother and sister (Juarez) to discuss their calling into the service of God; however, our brother had to work and was unavailable to meet with us. We spent the morning hours enjoying a little shopping, but most importantly, we enjoyed the companionship of the saints.

As we made our way to the church Saturday evening, we were happy to see so many of our young people cheerfully awaiting the meeting. Our young brothers and sisters greeted us warmly and seemed eager to ask their questions. To start, Brother Dennis read a bit from the Minister's Manual, which generated a question from one of our young sisters who asked, "Who wrote that book?" He explained our Minister's Manual was a guide for all of our ministers throughout the Church and that our Church is the same in Guatemala, as it is in America and throughout the world. Throughout this meeting, many



Brothers, sisters and families that attend the Mission.

interesting questions were posed to us by our brothers and sisters. It was a very successful meeting, as some of their concerns were, and we got to know them a little better by interacting with them during this question and answer session. We paused from our meeting to dine on pizza and soda and just to socialize with one another. This was a very enjoyable time evidenced by the love and fellowship that sprang forth between the saints, while enjoying our pizza feast. When we dismissed for the evening, we again looked forward to meeting with the Saints on Sunday morning.

Sunday morning, I was again pleased to find our brothers and sisters waiting for the morning meeting to begin. It was wonderful to see how eager the saints were to hear the word of God come forth. The Lord provided us with a beautiful Sunday morning. As I looked around the room, I estimated that we had about 42 people in attendance. Our young Deacons stood in the rear of the building during the service to assist anyone who may have a need, and to keep order (which was not needed because of the humbleness of the saints and the love expressed in the meeting). The young sisters sang songs of praise for us at the beginning of the meeting.

Brother Luis asked that I open the meeting since it was my first visit to Guatemala. As I spoke, I remembered a question one of our brothers asked Saturday night, "Does the Church have a dress code?" I spoke on the dress code that the word of God had given us, "Put on the whole Armor of God." Brother Luis translated as I spoke. I was followed by Brother Dennis, who continued to speak on the same topic, and we were closed-out by Brother Luis speaking to us in Spanish. Yet, the spirit was the same throughout. "What a fellowship, what a joy divine" seemed to penetrate our hearts as the spirit of God was felt by all. The saint's love manifested itself one towards another in this meeting and I wanted to prolong it because of this very spirit.

The sisters had prepared a great



Brother Luis Marroquin, Brother Dennis Moraco, and Brother Chat Young



Brother Chat Young and Brother Dennis Moraco on a home visit.

Guatemalan dinner for after the meeting for our further enjoyment. The sisters are as gifted in the kitchen there, as our sisters are in America. After dining sufficiently, Brothers Luis, Dennis and I met with Sister and Brother Juarez relative to our sister's call to become a Deaconess and our

brother's call to the office of a Teacher. As we talked to our brother, we could feel the humbleness, love, and joy flowing from him. Our brother was scheduled to work that day, but his desire to come to church

(Continued on Page 4)

Follow Me

By Brother John Bordeaux
Herndon, Virginia Branch

When Christ began to select His disciples, He chose ordinary people who had families and had to work for a living just as we do. But these men dropped all and followed Him. The Gospel according to Matthew (4:8-22) says, "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him." Matthew was called in a similar manner. Matthew 9:9 states, "And Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, 'Follow me.' And he arose, and followed him."

These men made a sacrifice to follow the Savior and be taught by Him. Likewise, we must make a commitment and follow Christ. Our baptism and confirmation are not the end but the beginning of our journey down the road to salvation and eternal life. We must give up the vain things of this world and be about the business of serving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. To do less is actually a disservice. Are we truly giving it our all? Are we heeding the call, Follow me?

This brings me to the sermon preached by Brother David Jordan at the General Church Conference on Sunday April 13, 2003. He spoke about not being satisfied with his commitment to the King. Brother David has a flourishing career as an attorney, makes lots of money, with the prospects of a very bright future. But that

isn't for him – he wants to serve God better. He feels that mammon has a more prominent place in his life than he likes, so he is giving up this career and rededicating his life to serving God.

Brother David Nolfi spoke passionately and forcefully on the same subject at Imperial, Pennsylvania that Sunday night. He talked about how we become consumed with material things, which diminish our dedication to Christ. Brother Nolfi marveled at the courage shown by Brother Jordan in making the change. Are we serving God or mammon? If we are serving mammon, can we make the change and follow Him?

Again in the Gospel of Matthew, Christ teaches His disciples, saying (Matthew 16:24-27), "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself,

"Our baptism and confirmation are not the end but the beginning of our journey down the road to salvation and eternal life."

and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." Follow Him in the true meaning of the call and lay up your treasure in Heaven, for Christ also said (Matthew 19:21), "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

When I made my covenant with God just over a year ago, I asked myself, how can I serve God in a way that would be pleasing to Him – how

can I follow Christ, what are my nets that must be cast aside? I haven't found the total answer yet, but I know there are some things we can all do. Read the scriptures and pray daily, keep the commandments, visit the sick and elderly, attend meetings faithfully, contribute to the Church, have ingrained in our hearts the attributes that Christ espoused in the beatitudes, which will allow us to be blessed (Matthew 5:3 – 5:12). If we do these things, we will have made a small step toward following Him.

A Visit to Guatemala

Continued from Page 3

won out over his natural employment. He felt a need to be in church. We then spoke to our sister (his wife), who had an experience the night before of her mother, who was a dutiful member before her demise. In this dream, her mother told her to follow after her in the Church. She felt good about this dream and shared it with her husband, telling him that she didn't know what was in store for her because this was her first experience in which she had dreamed of her mother in relationship to the Church. It became apparent to me that since we were unable to meet with them the day before, God's schedule supercedes man's schedule every time, for He blessed our sister with the dream about serving His Church. As our sister's tears flowed, so did mine. We laid hands on our brother and sister and prayed for the Lord to bless their upcoming duties. A 15-year-old young lady (Maria Manvilla) asked for her baptism, which was another highlight of our day. "This was indeed the day the Lord made, for we rejoiced and were glad in it."

As all good things must come to an end, Brother Luis drove Brother Dennis and me to the airport. My prayer was with the saints as we left Guatemala for home. May God continue to bless and keep our mission in Guatemala.



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers . . ." (1st Nephi 21:22-23).

Naturally speaking, when a mother nurses her children, she is giving of herself to that child. She is not giving the child anything external (like formula) but is actually giving the child what is produced inside of her. It is amazing how God created humans and animals with this ability, and it sustains their children until they are old enough to digest solid food and eat on their own. This scripture uses this as a metaphor for how we, as saints of God, must approach our witnessing to others. Specifically, it points to how we as Gentiles, who have received the restored Gospel, must begin to go out and spiritually "nurse" those who are of the House of Israel.

On a recent missionary trip to Dominica, I witnessed this "literally." We were near the ocean and several of the Dominican children began stepping on "sea eggs." These are sea creatures with spiny pricks surrounding their bodies. When you step on them, your feet are pierced with these painful spines. It seemed almost like a natural reaction that one of our sisters who was traveling with us on this trip, began to literally pick the children up and carry them in her arms away from the water in order to set them down and pull these painful spines, one by one, from their feet. The Dominican adults looked on in awe. They jokingly called her, "Sister Foot."

When we come into the Gospel and make a commitment to serve Him, we are making a commitment to serve others. It is the only way to prove our conversion. It is not enough to simply be a good person. God has commanded us throughout all the scriptures to love others as we would love ourselves. The Book of Mormon uses this beautiful metaphor to help us understand just how deep this love must be. It is more than just being kind to others, or saying nice things to them. We must demonstrate a much deeper love for them, carrying them in our arms and literally giving them something from within us. Spiritually speaking, the spirit of God is what is within us. Only the spirit would cause this sister to react so naturally the way she did to these children.

Interestingly, there comes a time when nursing must come to an end and a child must be able to eat on his/her own. Spiritually speaking, it is the same way. When those whom we have "nursed" into the Gospel begin to become strong, then it is time to let them grow on their own. Our role changes into that of a support person. I remember several years back in our Region when many of the seed of Joseph began coming into the Church. The brothers and sisters "nursed" them until the time came when they began to accept the Gospel, and God began to give them responsibilities in the Church like Deacons, Deaconesses, Teachers and even Elders. It was now time to "let go" and act as a support for them. To this day, they can never forget the extreme love that was shown to them during that time. In fact, many were suspicious because the love that was shown to them was so great. They thought perhaps we wanted their money or wanted to steal their children. Then they learned that this is a love that is much deeper than they ever knew before. Many people today cannot comprehend this kind of love.

Let us truly be nursing mothers and fathers to everyone we meet. We especially have been commissioned to go to the House of Israel. Those of the House of Israel who we know of, generally live in poverty, and so to them, we are like kings and queens. Yet, how beautiful is it when a king or a queen will sacrifice it all, love and nurse someone, until the day when they are grown and THEY can be a nursing mother or father to someone else.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork

The Ancient Records (Omni 1:18-23)

Dear friends,

Can you imagine what it would be like not to be able to read or write? What if you never were taught how to serve God or about God's rules of loving and asking others for forgiveness? How would you know about baptism, miracles, or heaven?

In the Book of Mormon and Bible days, many ancient records were kept on plates or sheets of brass or gold or other metals. When the people of Lehi came to this land, they brought brass plates with their history and the laws of God written on them. When they split into two groups, the Nephites and the Lamanites, the Nephites who served God, kept the precious brass plates. This knowledge kept them close to God.

One big thing that separates us from other churches is the fact that we believe in two great ancient books that teach us about God. They are the Bible from the tribe of Judah and the Book of Mormon from the tribe of Joseph. Another thing is that we are looking forward to the day when more ancient records from the other ten lost tribes are discovered and given to us to learn and study and be thrilled about.

When will we get these books? you ask. The Book of Mormon says when we Gentiles are so righteous, like the Brother of Jared was, when we are more hungry for these powerful records of God's dealings, when we are more loving and good towards each other, then God will bring them forth.



Where are these books? you ask. Only the Lord knows who has them already, or where they may be safely buried or hidden.

And now, I ask you, "What if you couldn't read?" In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin taught his sons to read ancient Egyptian writing so that they could read the brass plates that their forefathers had brought over from Jerusalem over five hundred years earlier. These plates taught them about God, like our Old Testament part of the Bible teaches us. They included the laws of Moses, and much information about the mysteries of God.

King Benjamin also taught his sons to read the plates of Nephi which contained the records and the sayings of their people from the time they left Jerusalem until their day and time. Each king or ruler of the Nephite people was told to record powerful prophecies and things from God. Some of them did, and some of them admitted they were men who sinned who simply passed the book on to the next leader. Some of them also wrote that it was hard to do the engravings so they only wrote a tiny part of what they had experienced from God.

King Benjamin had a father named King Mosiah (he also named one of his sons Mosiah). Both Mosiahs were men who loved to serve God and learn about his mysteries. When the first Mosiah was king, a huge stone covered with strange engravings was brought to him to read. It was carved and engraved in an ancient language that no one knew. But King Mosiah knew to ask God, our Creator, for help. And by the gift and the power of God, Mosiah did inter-

pret the engravings.

The stone gave an account of a King named Coriantumr, and the millions of his people who had lived and died since the days of the Tower of Babel. It told of God's mighty power. The original group followed a man named the Brother of Jared, across the ocean in eight barges that rode up and down, buried in sea currents. It was an amazing journey that landed them on these shores.

Then the ancient engravings told the sad story of a nation of people who began hating each other and had war after war. Even little children, women, and old people fought each other with hatred. They ignored the preachers who told them to follow God's laws and stop. They finally killed each other all off. The land Northward was covered with bones and the ruins of their fine cities.

Then about eighty years later when King Mosiah had died, his grandson, Mosiah, had grown up into a man who loved and served God. This King Mosiah was called a seer. A Seer is greater than a prophet. God

(Continued on Page 11)

WORD SEARCH

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Our Women Today

Atlantic Coast Hosts General Ladies' Uplift Circle Conference

By Sister Karen L. Progar
General Circle Editor

The General Ladies' Uplift Circle met in conference on Saturday, April 26, 2003 in the Hopelawn Branch. The meeting was appropriately begun with the singing of *Make Me a Blessing*. Since the inception of the Circle, the sisters have always sought to be a blessing in whatever project they have been requested to provide finances for or whatever endeavor they have chosen to support.

Sister Lorraine DeMercurio, Vice President, began our conference reminding us to be perfect, even as Christ is perfect. Sister Arline Whitton, President, then welcomed everyone and stated that she loved seeing everyone, concluding by saying that it is in loving that the heart is blessed.

After the officers and area presidents presented their reports, the collection was taken and added to our Special Project Fund, which will be used to purchase a van for Venezuela. Our business included a report on the 2004 Fellowship Weekend to be held in the Southeast Area.

A request was made that each Home Circle make name tags to be worn at General Circle Conferences. (Sisters, get crafting so that you can be ready for October's meeting.)

Sister Lorraine then shared a request from the Nigerian Team. A motion was made to send \$300 for the purpose of providing transportation assistance for our Nigerian sisters. A donation of \$1,000 for the San Carlos Mission Home was made with the \$1,900 balance in the Indian Mission Fund being sent to the AMOC to be

used as needed and \$3,000 was donated to the FMOC. It was reported that nearly \$3,300 has thus far been raised for the Special Project. After a lovely luncheon provided by the Atlantic Coast and a time of fellowship, the program, "Expressions of Joy," was presented by the Area and enjoyed by all those who attended. Each Local Circle presented a segment of the program. Sister Alyse Suska sang, *His Eye Is on the Sparrow*, accompanied on the flute by her mother, Sister Alice Suska. Other special selections included; *How Great Thou Art*, sung by Sister JoAnn Catalano, a violin solo of *Passing Over the Perils* by Sister April Calabro and a piano and harp duet of *What a Friend* by Sister Sherry Curtain and Sister Flo Lombardo. The program was concluded with, *Joy, Joy, Joy, Down in My Heart*, which we all felt "down in our hearts."

It is truly wonderful to have the opportunity to enjoy the fellowship of our sisters throughout the Church. Join us on Saturday, October 11th in Greensburg, Pennsylvania and personally enjoy that fellowship.

Youngstown, Ohio Ladies' Circle

By Sister Teresa J. Pandone

On Saturday, May 3, 2003, the Youngstown, Ohio Ladies' Uplift Circle hosted the 2nd Founder's Day Tea at The Piccadilly Victorian Tea Parlour in Canfield, Ohio. Thirty-eight (38) women were in attendance, the majority being our friends and family members. We enjoyed and shared a wonderful evening of fellowship.

Our theme and focus for the evening was Venezuela. Our President, Sister Eve Berardino, introduced our guest speaker, Sister Joyce Ross, who shared with us her visits to Venezuela and told of the missionary work being done in that region. She

communicated to us the many aspects of their culture and the conditions they are confronted with in their daily lives. We heard of the joy and blessings our brothers and sisters in Venezuela experience when our brothers and sisters from the USA visit there and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. They are so appreciative of the concern and love conveyed to them in many varied ways.

The reason for our focus on Venezuela was to assist them financially in their dire need for a vehicle (van). We were able, with this fundraising event, to present Sister Joyce Ross with a check to aid in the purchase of this vehicle for Venezuela to be used for their spiritual and natural needs. Brother Don Ross, Chairperson of the Venezuela Committee, expressed his thanks and sincere gratitude to those in attendance for their support of this work. Our Youngstown Circle Sisters were most appreciative of those who supported this missionary endeavor.

The Youngstown Circle enjoys reading and studying God's Holy Word and strives to help and encourage one another for opportunities for meaningful service to our fellow persons.

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Branch and Mission News

Finding Faith in the Woods

By Brother Peter Benyola

We often enjoy sermons on many of the things the Lord has in store for us concerning the coming of the Peaceful Reign, and so forth. Our area camping weekend had a different focus. The theme of the weekend was "Good Old Faith," that element of our spiritual lives whose absence renders everything we are taught meaningless.

Saints from all corners of our Southeast Region gathered at Myakka State Park on March 28, 2003 to rough it overnight, fellowship with one another, and hear the Word of God. After we arrived with our coolers and tents, we enjoyed God's creation, canoeing and walking the nature trails. The rest of the afternoon was spent doing nothing in particular but enjoying one another's company.

Saturday evening, after sharing a wonderful meal with everything from fried catfish and sausage with peppers to peanut butter and jelly, we were blessed with the visit of Brother Dan and Sister Dolores Picciuto of the San Carlos, Arizona Mission, whom Forest Hills and Cape Coral had in their midst for several weeks during their vacation. Brother Dan related several stories of how the Holy Spirit has been ever present in his missionary work. Blatant witness by him and others of the power of God has reaffirmed his faith time and time again during the potentially lonely and challenging undertaking of doing missionary work. We managed to provide light and a makeshift pulpit for Brother Dan so he could read the scripture in the pitch darkness of the woods, although we almost set his book on fire (not really). He was visiting the Cape Coral branch the following morning, so we closed our evening meeting and he took his leave of us. We proceeded to sing praises around a campfire and enjoyed

a concoction of Brother Jim "Jimmy Joe" Draskovich known as a mountain pie, composed of pie filling, bread, and butter, prepared within an iron over the fire.

The Sunday meeting was held in a nearby pavilion with many showers of blessings flowing from above — our first rainfall of the weekend. The Sunday School was taught by Brothers Bryan Griffith and Corey Morris. The subject was, of course, faith, and the parable of the mustard seed was discussed. Elders present at the meeting were Brothers David Checchi our SEMBA Chaplain, Brother Isaac Smith our GMBA Chaplain, Brother Scott Griffith and Brother Phil Benyola. Brother David showed us that sometimes when we pray for something, God sometimes says no to us. We need to have faith that there is a reason why we are sometimes denied what we want and that God always has a plan for us. Brother Phil explored a different facet of faith, as he shared the story of the woman with the issue of blood. Though this woman was stricken with an illness for many years, she had tremendous faith and belief that all she had to do was touch the garment of her Savior and all would be well.

The saints who came to be fed left ready to face the world for a while longer.

Inner City Branch, Detroit, Michigan

Church Dedication
October 20, 2002

The day the members of the Inner City Branch of Detroit, Michigan had long awaited finally came to pass on October 20, 2002 at the dedication of their new building at 4720 Porter Street. The branch is located in the middle of the Hispanic community of the city of Detroit. The members of the branch have a great desire to reach out to the "Seed of Joseph" in this community that they might enjoy the blessings that God has for each

and every one of them.

Many visitors from the Region were there. We had visitors from as far away as Mexico, California, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Canada. We started our morning with community singing including several selections from the *Songs of Zion*. Opening prayer was offered by Apostle Peter Sclaro.

Brother Steve Champine began the service by recalling the efforts of the Inner City Branch to build their building, and stated "Ahh, we knew the day would come." He recalled that at the beginning of the year, when our property was finally purchased, we walked from the school building that we were meeting in down to the property singing, *We're Marching to Zion*. He also related the Inner City Branch's history that started in 1977 at the Rex Hotel, and how we then moved to the corner of Brooklyn and Temple into a very large old church building. We ultimately sold that building, and rented the basement from the new owner until he sold the building and it was demolished. For the past four years, the Inner City Branch was meeting at the Maybury Elementary School's gymnasium. He also related the vision that Brother Joe Milantoni had in regards to the work in the Inner City, starting with the Urban Indian Committee. The first Urban Indian Committee consisted of Brother Joe Milantoni, Brother John Straccia, Brother Dick Lobzun, Brother Tony Gerace, and Brother Roy DePerno. At the dedication, a vision was had that Brother Tony Gerace, who was unable to come to the dedication, was sitting with the ministry.

President of the Region, Brother Lyle Criscolo related how he kept encouraging us over the long waiting period that our building would get built. Apostle Dominic Thomas, President, of the Church, spoke and said that he was happy the Brothers of the Inner City picked up the work that the Brothers of the Urban Indian Committee started. He said that they were involved in keeping God's work alive, and there is joy in doing God's work. Apostle Paul Palmieri gave the prayer of dedication in which the gift of

tongues was spoken. Apostle Peter Scolaro followed and told us that "Jesus is our model. Diligence is what makes sinners different from saints. We cannot be casual about the work in the Inner City. We have the Divine Nature. Be diligent to move forward."

Brother Dominic asked the members of the Inner City Branch to come forward and he offered a prayer for them. The Inner City Choir then sang several songs, which included, *To See the Morning Light*, *Standing on Holy Ground*, and *Gratis Das*.

Brother Dave DiBattista, General Church Trustee, then presented a new Book of Mormon to the Inner City Branch.

Brother Larry, Sister Rosanne and Sister Jennifer Champine sang the song, *Cornerstone*, which was a wonderful selection for this special day.

Brother Steve Champine told of many experiences that we had in the building of the Inner City Branch. He told of how the Branch had fasted for a month asking for God's direction and the many experiences that were had because of the fast.

The brothers and sisters from Tijuana, Mexico, came forward along with the Spanish speaking members of the Inner City Branch and closed with the song, *Bendiciones a Jose*.

Closing prayer was offered by Brother Alex Gentile.

It was decided that on this very special day, two meetings would be held because of the large number of people that were expected to come and share in the joy with the members of the Inner City Branch. The Spirit that was felt in the morning service continued into the evening, and it was wonderful to have the whole day to share in God's blessings.

Lake Worth, Florida

By Sister Josie Jasmin

"I am the light and the life of the world, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" (3rd Nephi 9:18).

Brother Gene Perri opened our service this beautiful Easter Sunday asking that we take a walk with him through the life of Jesus today. Brother Gene then began with the life of Jesus, when he was 12 years old and then on to the baptism by John the Baptist.

"Behold the lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world . . . whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose..."

John did the will of God in baptizing Jesus, the heavens were opened unto him and a voice from heaven said "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

We were told of the three temptations of Jesus and of how He withstood each one. The Devil was unsuccessful in tempting the Lord, being an example to us that we can withstand anything with Jesus on our side. Brother Gene stated that serving God means success in our lives, without Him we cannot do anything.

He then spoke of Jesus and the woman at the well. "Jesus quenched her thirst by giving her living water. He will quench the thirst within anyone who desires a drink of this living water. Fill my cup Lord and make me whole! Let Jesus find a resting place in our hearts. Let him wash away our sins and set us free, that we may be free indeed."

We then walked with Jesus as he spoke of the Nobleman and the healing of his son, and of many other miracles performed by Jesus.

We walked with Him at His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the prayer in Gethsemane, the denial of Peter, the Crucifixion. Jesus was tormented and treated with much shame, yet He still asked the Father to "forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He was placed in a borrowed tomb which was sealed with a large stone and it was guarded by soldiers. We then walked with the women as they came to the tomb on the third day and found the stone rolled away, and as they looked inside there was an angel sitting on the right side. He said to be not afraid, ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified, He is not here, He is risen, go and tell the

disciples and Peter.

The Resurrection! He rose from the dead and many of the saints who died arose with Him. Jesus arose for you and for me. Weeping may endure for the night but joy cometh in the morning!

We then walked with Cleopas and the other disciple on the road to Emmaus while they talked of the things that happened as Jesus drew near to them but they knew Him not. They conversed together of what was written in the scripture concerning Him and when they arrived at the village where they went they constrained Him to stay with them that night. When they sat down to eat He took bread and broke and blessed it. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him and He vanished out of their midst. They said: "Didn't our hearts burn within us by the way as He spoke to us?"

The plan of salvation is for everyone. You too can walk with Him today. Come to Jesus with a broken heart and contrite spirit and remember that Jesus loves you and He wants you. Can we imagine the day when we shall rise to meet Him in the air? Imagine it and never forget it, for if we are faithful it will surely come to pass. The Baldwin family honored us with singing *Follow Me*. A wonderful spirit was felt by all. Jesus is asking everyone to follow Him and He will give us rest and peace.

Brother Gene extended a welcome to those who were not baptized yet to come and follow Jesus.

On Sunday April 27th. The service was opened by Brother Carl Romano; he expounded on the spirit of God. It must be in our midst continually and an invitation is extended to all to "Come taste the grass on the summit," where the grass is much sweeter to our taste buds. Brother Carl exhorted unto us to do the will of God in worthiness. It is a great joy to be in the Gospel Restored. It leads and guides us through life. This Gospel will not fail; it is filled with the living waters needed to survive. It will show us the way of salvation, if only we are willing

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Lake Worth, FL

Continued from Page 9

to receive. We have to keep the faith and be good examples to the world around us. "People Need the Lord!"

Brother Mike Radd continued and read from Mormon 9:28-29. "Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves from all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lust, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and living God. See that ye are not baptized unworthily; see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ unworthily..." In the Word we find instructions that we may attain perfection when we stand before our heavenly father. His word and His Gospel is sure and should be grounded and rooted deeply within our hearts and souls. In the scriptures we find many excellent role models to follow and to keep us on the right path.

Brother Gene invited everyone to come and partake of the Word of God and the life-giving water that will bring us to eternal life. The Gospel will lead us along the way as we endeavor to serve him fully.

News from Sterling Heights Michigan

By Sister Anita Znoy

On February 23, 2003 we had many visitors at our branch despite the 10 inches of snow that had fallen the night before. They were there to witness the ordination of Brother Sam Cuomo into the ministry.

Brother Lyle Criscuolo, Region President, opened our meeting. He compared the Bible to a mirror. He shared with us that every morning we get up and look in the mirror. If we don't like it we change it right away. The Bible tells us the way we should be. We should make adjustments accordingly. "God sees us for who we are. We see weakness and God sees

someone He can use."

Brother John DiBatista followed Brother Lyle. He spoke about planting the seeds. All you have to ask someone is "Do you know my Jesus?" and then give your testimony. Not everyone will accept it but you plant a seed and the love of God will help it grow. When we lay hands on our brother today he will be obligated to spread the work of God. That is the job of the ministry.

After the luncheon and a good fellowship with the saints, Brother Peter Scolaro spoke of the Cuomo family in Windsor and reflected on the times he visited there as a child. Brother Sam Cuomo had a wonderful beginning in the Church at the Windsor Branch. Brother Peter answered the question of why now and not earlier. He explained that being chosen for the ministry is a total calling. It is both simple and complex. This ministry helps all of us become one with the Father.

Brother Lyle spoke of making adjustments to reach our goal. "We make them continuously. Brother Sam will feed the flock. He is like a servant who will care for his Master. He will go out of his way to care of them. It will take all of us deciding to fulfill our callings to serve together."

Brother Sam DiFalco stated that the Lord chooses who will serve Him. It takes a lot of prayer. Brother Sam shared the experiences that were had that told us that God had chosen Brother Sam Cuomo.

The first was a dream that Brother Lou Visconti had. In his dream he and Brother Spencer Everett were at the sacrament table breaking the bread. When he looked up again, it was Brother Sam standing there and he offered the prayer over the bread.

The second was a dream that Brother John Straccia had. Brother John dreamed that Brother Sam was standing in a bright light from above. He looked up and heard a voice say, "I am preparing him." He saw Sister Kim, his wife, standing off to one side and disinterested. Sam turned to her with his hand extended. She came to him to stand in the light with him.

The third was an experience that

Brother Larry Henderson had.

Brother Larry said that after a fasting and prayer meeting of the ministry, he had prayed to the Lord asking who should be called. He asked the Lord if he could know his name. He heard the Lord speak to him and say, "Brother Sam Cuomo." Brother Larry wrote the name on a piece of paper and took it with him to the next Elders meeting. He presented the piece of paper after his name was announced as a confirmation.

Brother Lou Vitto washed Brother Sam's feet and Brother Lou Visconti ordained him. After the congregation sang *To the Work*, Brother Peter Scolaro laid hands on Sister Kim for the strength to be a minister's wife.

Brother Sam Cuomo testified that he was grateful to God for being raised in the Church. He shared that some of the members that he grew up with were there today and many of them also hold offices in the Church. He told the young people to stick together; "You have a wonderful church." He continued by saying, "Ten years ago I was not ready. Now at 52 I feel the need to do more for the Lord. Brother Dominic Thomas came to me in a dream and said I needed to fast and pray about my calling while I was in Florida. It has been nine years since then and I feel like part of the family here. The night Brother Sam DiFalco told me I'd been chosen I had a dream and in my dream, my mother was smiling at me. She looked younger and she didn't say anything, she just smiled."

Brother Dominic Thomas rejoiced in his new minister. He told Brother Sam that his ministry is the whole Church. He closed our meeting by directing us to keep the peace of God prevalent in our churches and missions, be united and pure of heart in a righteous and loving home, have the illumination of God's Spirit, and be willing to go to do His work. He also encouraged us to love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love one another and His Church. The Church is full of the gift's, blessings and the Spirit of God.

Ordination in Atlanta, Georgia

By Sister Bonnie Kunkel

On Sunday, April 27, brothers and sisters from the Atlanta, Georgia Branch met for the ordination of Brother Johnny Flores into the office of Deacon.

The day began with some adversity, such as being locked out of the building we rent and then being put into a smaller room in which to hold our meeting. Quarters were a little tight for the group but we managed and went on to have a wonderful, spirit-filled day. Brother Ron Morle, Presiding Elder, reminded us that we can be more blessed when overcoming adversity.

Sunday School began with the singing of *Good Morning, God*. After opening prayer by Brother Bill Kunkel, we continued with singing and testimonies. Sister Teresa Kunkel, assistant superintendent for our Sunday School, told us that she had, all week, wanted to sing, sing, sing and indeed we did today. Brother Cameron Staley closed our Sunday School in prayer, and we moved right into our Sunday Service.

Brother Johnny had many friends and family members arrive to witness the ordaining of our brother. Sister Crystal and Brother Corrie Morris, along with Desiree and Sara Ann, came from Mid-Georgia to be with us. We had a full room but there was still plenty of room for the spirit to circulate.

Brother Mark Kovacic read from Ephesians 4:11-14 concerning ordinations. He told us how workers were needed in days of old and still today, the need is there. The original Twelve Apostles were called by Jesus to be workers and they in turn, called more workers. Deacons were ordained as helpers, for both spiritual and physical needs but a Deacon must exhibit certain qualities – humility and love with a quiet, soothing spirit, quick to help God's people. Deacons shall work together with other ordained officers for the perfecting of the saints so that they all may be as a sweet savor to God in edifying the body of Christ.

After the group sang *To the Work*, Brother Ron told of the unity that the Branch Priesthood felt at Brother Johnny's calling and how they all know him to be of a humble spirit filled with love and a great desire to work for the Lord. For the benefit of visitors, Brother Ron went on to explain the act of washing feet. Brother Ken Staley then washed our brother's feet and we all sang *Ye Who Are Called to Labor*. Brother John was then surrounded by the elders and Brother Tom Jones led a prayer asking the Lord's direction upon the ordination. Brother Johnny was then ordained into the office of Deacon by Brother Malcolm Paxon.

Given the opportunity to testify, Brother John thanked his mother and stepfather for teaching him about the love of God and for always supporting him. He also thanked all of the brothers and sisters for taking him into the "church family." His love for God and the Church was very evident as he spoke.

Brother John's stepfather then told us that John sets a good example. He has always been a good son, and the focus of their home has always been to have Christ in their lives so that they may bring Christ to others.

Communion was served, and then Brother Johnny's wife, Sister Melanie, gave a brief testimony to her love of God and her support for her husband. She has no doubt he will do a sincere work for the Lord.

The meeting was closed and we as a group went to another location for lunch. We all left for our homes being filled both spiritually and naturally and thanking God for a wonderful day.

The Children's Corner

Continued from Page 6

gives him special stones called Interpreters to be able to read ancient records. He can see into the past or the future. He must be so close to God that he would never abuse this power.

This King Mosiah was given twenty-four golden plates to read. The plates had been found by King Limhi's men in the ruins of great cities in the land Northward. They gave even more information about the Jaredite peoples' rise and fall.

The only person who could read the ancient engravings was a man of God. In our church, we know that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. When God has a plan, it happens. When God makes a promise, he keeps it. He promised that there will be more ancient records and greater knowledge coming forth for us to read, study and learn about. He has promised us that another Seer, a Choice Seer named Joseph will also come forth. Many believe that this will happen in our lifetimes. Keep your hearts clean. Love and serve God.

Ancient records are coming forth. Powerful days are ahead for those of us who believe and serve our living God.

With love,
Sister Jan

Children Blessed

Sophia Josephine, daughter of William and Sister Lori Sayavich, was blessed on May 4, 2003 in the Youngstown, Ohio Branch.

Mariah Lynn Bodi, daughter of Steven Bodi and Tracy Lynn Sission was blessed on April 20, 2003 in the Lorain, Ohio Branch.

Tiernen Wade Eutsey, son of Brother Milford and Sister Lindsay Eutsey was blessed on March 2, 2003 in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch.

Marisa Lynne Hamet, daughter of Brother Frank and Sister Shannon Hamet was blessed on March 23, 2003 in the Detroit, Michigan Branch #2.

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Children Blessed

Continued from Page 11

Antonia James Rivera, son of James Rivera and Elena Paesani, was blessed on March 23, 2003 in the Redford, Michigan Mission.

Kayla Marie Rivera, daughter of James Rivera and Elena Paesani was blessed on March 23, 2003 in the Redford, Michigan Mission.

Isabella Louisa Bruno, daughter of Kenneth and Schanel Bruno was blessed on April 13, 2003 in the Redford, Michigan Mission.

Hope Noel Yoder, daughter of Brother Eric and Sister Angela Yoder was blessed on May 11, 2003 in the Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch.

Victoria Ann Zaluski, daughter of Jennifer and Chuck Zaluski was blessed on May 11, 2003 in the Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch.

Giana Marie Palmieri, daughter of Brother Mark and Sister Rilla Palmieri was blessed on March 30, 2003 in the Plumbrook, Michigan Branch.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Brother Chuck Giles of the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch was reinstated on February 23, 2003.

Brother Nicholas Prokup was baptized on December 15, 2002 in the Liberty, Ohio Branch. He was baptized by Brother Ralph Cartino, and was confirmed by Brother Wayne Martorana.

Address Change

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Ordinations

Brother Anthony J. Dyer was ordained a Deacon in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch on December 1, 2002. His feet were washed by Brother Ron Dyer and he was ordained by Brother Wally Cihomsky.

Brother Mike Pandone was ordained a Teacher in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Gary Champine and he was ordained by Brother Don Pandone.

Brother Mario Zaccagnini was ordained a Teacher in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Richard Thomas and he was ordained by Brother Tom Everett.

Brother Jordan Champine was ordained a Deacon in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Larry Champine and he was ordained by Brother Steve Champine.

Brother Eric Baez was ordained a Deacon in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Claude Champine and he was ordained by Brother Gary Champine.

Brother Jim DiFalco was ordained a Deacon in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Sam DiFalco and he was ordained by Brother Richard Thomas.

Sister Donna Baez was ordained a Deaconess in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. Her feet were washed by Sister Rachel Mora and she was ordained by Brother Dick Lobzun.

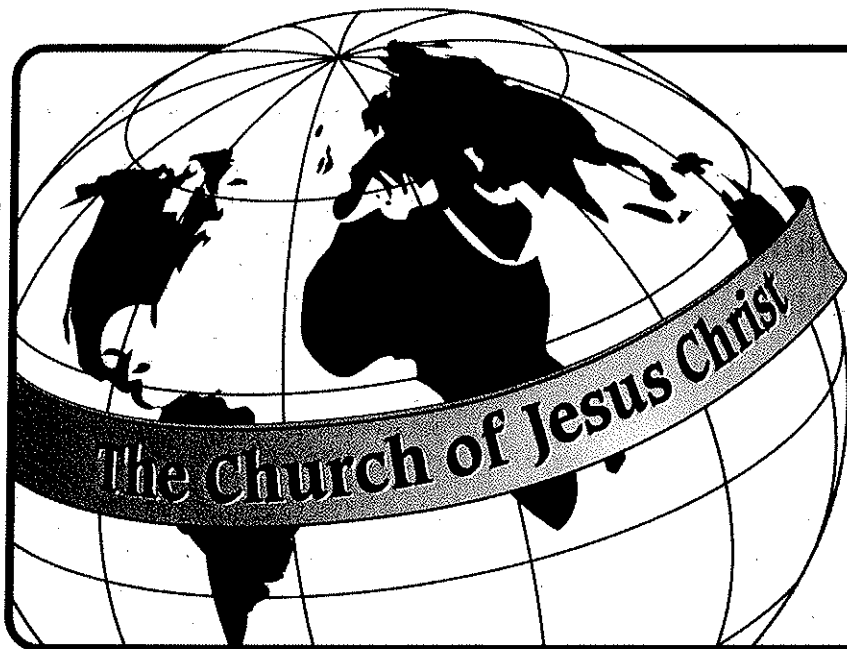
Brother Ken Henderson was ordained a Deacon in the Redford, Michigan Mission on April 27, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Bill Buffa and he was ordained by Brother Dick Lobzun.

Brother Jeremy Schroeder was ordained a Deacon in the Redford, Michigan Mission. His feet were washed by Brother Dominic DiBattista and he was ordained by Brother Sam DiFalco.

OBITUARIES

GUY KARELLI

Brother Guy Karelli of the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to his reward on April 26, 2003. He is survived by his wife, Joelee; son, Guy A. Karelli; and one grandson, Jason Karelli.



The Gospel News

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August, 2003

Volume 59, No. 8

Let This Mind Be In You

By Brother Jeffrey Giannetti

The inspiration of God is a blessed and wonderful tool we have, as servants of God to gain a greater and deeper understanding of God's will in our lives. Recently, while preaching a sermon, the Lord inspired me with an understanding of several verses that had not occurred to me in the past, though I had read these verses many, many times. This understanding may not be new to you, but I felt it might be beneficial and edifying to share what the Lord brought to my mind. It is my prayer the Lord will bless you as you read these words and that with His help, we each might apply them to our lives.

Over the years in lessons and sermons, I have often used verses from the passage of Scripture found in Philippians 2:5-11, "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the*

death on the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." As I spoke, all of these verses taken together revealed a new understanding of the meaning of "Let this mind be in you."

Paul provides instruction to the Philippians to "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." This admonition on its own is quite powerful and presents a lofty spiritual goal. We are instructed to be like Christ, model His thoughts and fully allow His spirit to direct our lives. However, as we learn in I Nephi 3:7, the Lord never issues a command ("Let this mind be in you...") unless he also provides the way this command can be accomplished. Paul gives the command and then clarifies the type of mind Christ possessed. In these verses we are able to gain a deep insight into exactly how the mind of Christ operates.

In verse six of the second chapter of Philippians, Paul establishes the greatness of Christ, making him equal with God or in fact that He was God (John 1:1). Literally translated, this verse conveys that Christ's deity was certain and is a material truth. Prior to His arrival on earth, Christ was in a heavenly realm, in a place and position equal and one with God. In the Gospel of Matthew, we read that Christ was referred to as, "... Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

After acknowledging the deity of Christ, Paul moves to the incredible act of sacrifice, humility and obedience offered by our Lord in becoming man. In obedience to God, Christ emptied, or divested Himself of His heavenly glory and surroundings. He took upon Himself the likeness of man in the form of a servant. While Jesus Christ never ceased to be one with God (see John 17 or III Nephi 19:29), He clearly laid His glory aside to become flesh, all in obedience to God. Our minds cannot fully comprehend the sacrifice entailed in relinquishing the glory of heaven for our sakes.

But this was not all, as a man, Christ also humbled himself. As we read in verses seven and eight, He made himself a servant to all mankind, even unto death. "...He humbled

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Open Door for the Gospel in Nepal: A Dream of Climbing Mount Zion vs. Mount Everest

By Brother Ram C. Baral

On January 25, 2003, I was visiting the house of Brother Ken and Sister Sharon Staley. At the same time, there were some precious brothers and sisters in the house; Brother Art and Sister Martha Gehly, Brother Joel and Sister Ruth Gehly, and Brother John and Sister Caryl DiBattista. We had a very important discussion about the urgency for us to go to Nepal, the land of the Himalayan Mountains. Then, we retired for the night's rest.

That night, I was deeply concerned about the work in Nepal. Then, I prayed very fervently for the intervention of the Lord to open the door to the Gospel in that land. I groaned and cried a lot by my bedside. We have been praying for this for a very long time. I read the following scripture prior to my prayer:

"Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions. I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people. Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause" (Psalms 35:17).

As I began to pray, God would give me scripture as an answer to my questions as follows:

How long, O Lord will I have to be tested and tried in America for so many trials?

• *"O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! Even cry out unto thee of violence and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? For spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention" (Habakkuk 1:2-3).*

How long will you keep Nepal under the hand of the Communists and Hindu fanatics?

• *"How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? For ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death; Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved" (Psalms 13:1-4).*

• *"How long, Lord? Wilt thou be angry for ever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire?" (Psalm 79:5).*

Finally, God gave me one more scripture as an answer to my prayers and questions above:

• *"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, but there are many adversaries" (1st Corinthians 16:9).*

While Paul was busy establishing new congregations, he learned that his Christian communities back in Corinth were in serious trouble. There were reports of rivalry, immoral behavior, and confusion over belief and practice, factions in the churches, as well as challenges to Paul's own apostolic authority. Likewise, in Nepal we also have many kinds of adversaries such as communist insurgencies, growth and invasions of hiding terrorists from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India, growth of mosques, etc. Moreover, in the royal palace there are massacres of the king, the queen, princes and princesses, and the whole family of King Birendra. There are

secret killings of the Royal Nepal army personnel, killings of innocent people in the hillsides by the communists, just like the Gadianton robbers; secret combinations of evil powers in the nation are eminent in Nepal now (Enos 1:23, Mosiah 4:1, Helaman 2, and 3rd Nephi 1:27). Nonetheless, I am so delighted to get these promising verses from the Lord:

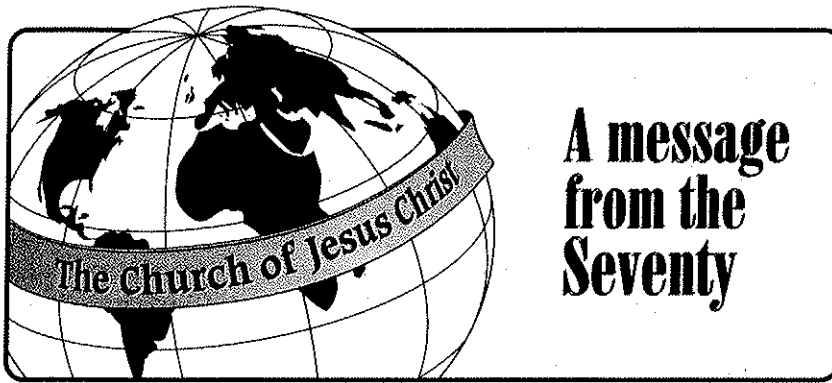
- *"Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).*
- *"I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument" (Isaiah 41:15).*
- *"Thou shalt be a blessing" (Genesis 12:2).*
- *"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Exodus 33:14).*

I rejoiced in these devotions that God is opening the door for the Gospel in Nepal beyond the adversaries (1st Corinthians 16:9; Luke 12:32; Helaman 2:4, 11-13; Mormon 1:18; and 4th Nephi 1:42).

Consequently, I had a dream in the morning at about 4:30 a.m. After the dream, I could not go to bed. I started to wonder and ponder about the plain and precious visions of the dream. The dream and experience are explained as follows:

I was standing on the top of the mountain, which was called Mount Zion. Then, I was peering down below where I saw a long line of people coming to the mountaintop. However, there was a huge river made by glaciers. This river was sign posted as the Jordan River. That river was very cold. Before they came to the mountaintop, there was a huge and wide baptismal font by the bank of the river. It was very cold because of the snow-melted water. There were 24 elders or priests stationed to baptize. Their garments were white and they looked like the ancient high priest robe as explained in the Book of Exodus. I heard profoundly melodious

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Trip to Dominica

By Evangelist Jerry Valenti

We thank God for a very successful trip to Dominica, which took place from May 8-12. The attendees for this trip were Brothers Jerry Valenti and Carl Huttenberger Jr., and Sisters Cheryl Cervone and Cindy Bright. Unfortunately, Brother Carl's flight from Newark was delayed, causing him to arrive a day late; but even that had one good side benefit, which will be mentioned later.

Brother Raphael Auguiste met us at the airport. He had just picked up the 15-passenger van, which the Church has purchased, to use as a church bus in Dominica—so we were its first passengers. The bus was put to good use during this visit. We stayed at the home of Brother Raphael and Sister Helena and were quite comfortable there. They were thrilled to be able to host us at their home and we enjoyed the opportunity for considerable quality time with them and their family.

On Friday morning, we rose early and made the hour drive to the capital city of Roseau. Our primary purpose of visiting the city was to acquire information and statistics on drug and alcohol abuse in Dominica as part of the effort to establish a substance abuse center there. Sister Cheryl is part of the team working on this project so she led our quest for the necessary data. After visiting several government offices and the criminal investigation division at police headquarters, we finally came upon the drug prevention unit office where

we were rewarded with some good information, which will hopefully be helpful in acquiring a grant to fund the planned center.

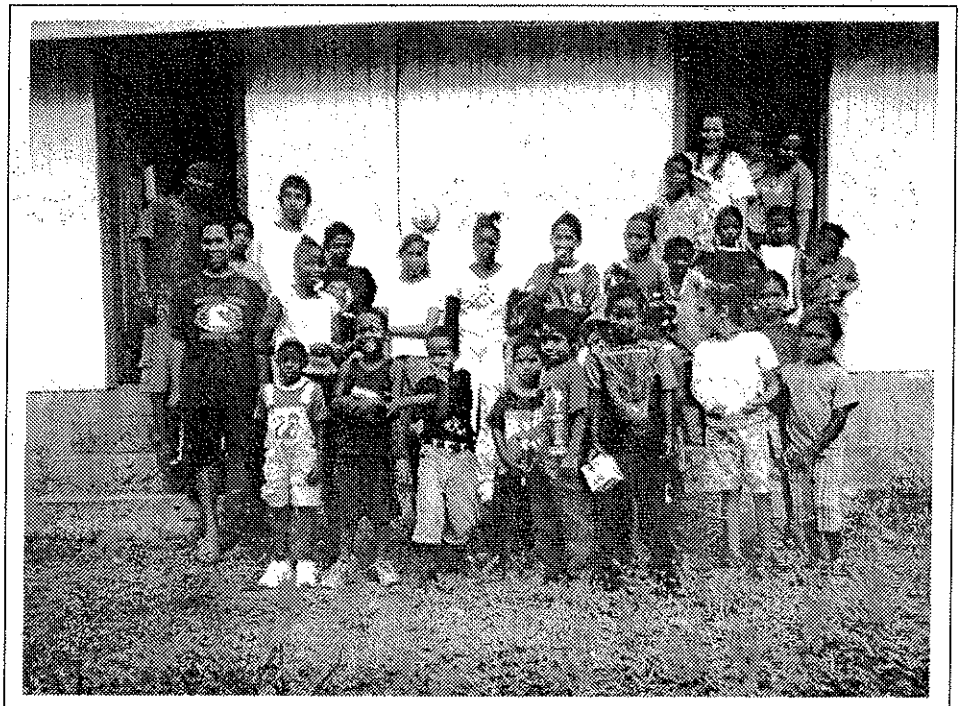
Next, it was on to the airport to meet Brother Carl's incoming flight. While waiting for him to clear customs, we struck up a conversation with Valda James who is one of the car rental people at the airport (she recognized Brother Jerry who has rented from her several times in the past). We told her about the Church efforts in Dominica and about the Vacation Bible School planned for the next day. She agreed to bring her three children to the school.

Upon arriving back in Concord, we focused on preparing the commu-

nity building for the Vacation Bible School. Under the direction of Sister Cindy, this otherwise drab little building was transformed into a child-friendly environment with colorful pictures and curtains hung on the walls from the ceiling. Sister Cindy had prepared lessons for three age groups (3-7, 8-12, 13-18), including appropriate crafts, snacks, etc. She brought an entire suitcase to Dominica loaded with just materials for them.

The efforts were rewarded as a total of 31 children attended the Vacation Bible School on Saturday. Included in this number were the three children of Valda James as well as a bunch, which were gathered by Brother Raphael with the new church bus. The teachers for the day were Sisters Cindy and Kathleen for the youngest group, Sister Cheryl and Brother Terry (who was celebrating his 18th birthday) for the middle group and Brothers Jerry and Carl for the teenagers. The children truly enjoyed this event and we believe that this type of activity will be a requirement in moving the Church forward in

(Continued on Page 4)



Children who attended Vacation Bible School.

Trip to Dominica

Continued from Page 3

Dominica. In order to promote this, it is our intention to establish a permanent position on the Dominica team to focus on children's activities and keep the young interested in the Church.

Sunday was Mother's Day and we had a prayer in our hearts that the Lord would bless our worship service as we prepared for church that morning. Before we even left the house, Sister Helena surprised us with the announcement that she is expecting another baby! The baby is due to arrive in mid-September and having already had five boys, Sister Helena is

whom had attended the school the previous day. This represented one of our largest congregations in Dominica yet.

Brother Jerry opened the meeting by describing how the Church can be like a mother to us, using the parables in Luke 15 as a text (the lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son). Brother Carl followed on a similar theme, reading from I Nephi 22 and describing how God protects us in times of trouble. We had a time of testimony as well as special prayer for the mothers and communion for the members of the Church. During the time of anointing, several mothers brought their children forward to be

Council Office and spent some time speaking to the Carib chief and one of the counselors. They told us that the Carib tribe is hosting a 100th anniversary celebration in July and offered the Church the opportunity to sponsor an activity for this event. One segment is devoted to drug and alcohol awareness so we will try to sponsor at least a part of this segment (funds permitting). It turns out that the General Missionary Association Youth-in-Action group will arrive during the final few days of the celebration during which the drug and alcohol awareness portion will be presented. This was a nice confirmation of our involvement in that area. We are very thankful for all that was accomplished on this trip. In addition to the above, we were able to identify a suitable guesthouse to host the upcoming Youth-in-Action tour and also identified the necessary steps to get the Church legally registered in Dominica. We look forward to participating in the growth of the Church in Dominica and are making plans to petition God in fasting and prayer in the coming months so that He will direct us in the proper approach to take to accomplish this. We want to be as open as possible to God's direction, even to the point of stationing someone in Dominica for an extended period of time if that is God's will. Please join us in prayer, as you are so inspired.



Brothers teaching a teenage class at the Vacation Bible School.

obviously hoping this one will be a girl.

We had borrowed 26 folding chairs and arranged them the previous night for the Sunday worship service. However, when we opened the building, we watched as over 20 children swarmed into the room and occupied just about all of the chairs! We were sent scrambling back to the house to bring down stools for enough seating for the adults. By the time the meeting started, 40 people were in attendance, including 25 children, almost all of

anointed for rather serious concerns (asthma, learning disabilities, etc.) and asked that God would heal their children. It was encouraging to witness the faith of these mothers in presenting their children to the Lord. Several who attended the meeting gave us their names and addresses and asked us to notify them directly the next time we will be holding services in Dominica.

Before leaving for the airport on Monday, we stopped by the Carib

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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God" (1st Chronicles 12:22).

"All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king" (1st Chronicles 12:38).

This portion of scripture is one of the most exhilarating show of unity that can be found in all of scripture. This was a time when Saul and his sons had died for the sin Saul committed by going to the witch of Endor for advice. Besides that sin, he committed many others. After his death, David was crowned king over Israel. Every tribe of Israel was represented as they all came to David, by the thousands, to show their support for him, and for a new united Israel. Notice how it says that they all came *with a perfect heart*. The people had been so disappointed in Saul that they wanted to see things made right once again for Israel. They were not interested in being separated from each other, but wanted to come together to defend and lift up their homeland. They had no other motive, but were united in their hearts for a good cause. A three-day celebration ensued when they were all together, and they lifted up praises to God with their musical instruments. They were truly "waving the flags of Zion" from the rooftops and the hilltops! Just imagine being there!

Many of us know the feeling of rooting for our favorite football, or baseball team, and know the feeling of victory. This kind of celebration in Israel was so much greater. First of all, there were thousands of them, and secondly, the enemy was actually evil! The victory they were celebrating was really a celebration of unity – united Israel.

Today in The Church of Jesus Christ a call is going out for us to unify, and to wave the flags of Jesus Christ to a world that is dying. A call is going out that we would grow, not only in number, but also in spirit and power. The armies of Israel displayed an enormous amount of strength and power as they boldly came together in great number. We are being asked to display an enormous amount of strength and power in our own branches and missions, as we come together and evangelize the Gospel to our neighbors and to our friends. Years ago, the Church was a "community" church. Today, it has become a "commuter" church. In many of our branches and missions, most members live many miles away, while people who live next door to the Church, don't even know who we are. It's time that we, like Israel, unify our efforts, go out, and bring them in! Truly, the door to the ark of safety (the Church) is still open. We do not know how much longer it will be open, but while it is open, we need to bring our families, our friends, and our loved ones on board. We need to display unity and support as Israel did for a common cause. When we are able to do this in great power, then God will cause this tiny stone (the Church) that was cut out of the mountain, to smite the image at the feet, and the image will crumble. That image today is sin and false doctrines that are running rampant throughout the world. We have a responsibility to tell others about the truth we have been given. We have a responsibility to go out and *bring them in!*

One final thought. Remember that the armies came together with a **perfect heart**. We cannot underestimate the need for us to be a righteous people in order to accomplish what we would like for the Church. God can only work with us to the measure of our righteousness. Whatever you put into the Gospel, is what you get out. Put in only a little of your time and effort, and get out only a little. But if we purify ourselves through fasting and prayer; calling upon our Lord for strength, and unite in power, God can take us all to places we've never seen before. Then we like Israel can "celebrate" for not just three days, but forever. It is up to us.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork



The Zoramites Pretend To Serve God

Dear Girls and Boys,

We have to be very careful who we listen to, who we believe in, and what music we listen to and sing. Today electronic computers have made it possible to sparkle beautiful, fake lights on the heads of many popular singers. These people do not sing about the good and the beautiful things of life.

Usually they sing about sex and empty ways of acting. I say empty because when you are hurting or in trouble and try to remember those words or call upon that singer, nothing is there to help you with your pain or your fears.

Satan, that old devil, has tried from the beginning of time to trick God's children into only listening to *part* of the truth so they would stop loving each other, taking care of God's things, and feeling joyful all the time.

Today, many popular singers mix in a few of God's words with their songs and yet actually just send you an empty message.

In the Book of Mormon this same thing happened. A large group of rich men in the land of the Zoramites made up their own religion. Dressed in gold and fancy clothes, one by one they would climb to the top of a very high stage. Once there, they would say in a loud voice all sorts of mixed up things, pretending to pray after speaking many lies. One by one each man would

utter the same words, and then they would all return to their homes where they would never speak of God until the following week when they met together again. Yes, these people used some beautiful and holy-sounding words, but their hearts were really set upon gold and owning riches.

None of the poor people who had helped build the temple and high platform were allowed to come in and join these men in their weird religion of lies. So the poor people were open

Satan...has tried from the beginning of time to trick God's children into only listening to part of the truth...

and hungry to hear the beautiful words of truth the ministers from Zarahemla came to tell them.

These ministers were some of the same ones who had converted thousands of Lamanites to the Lord. They were Alma, Ammon, two of their brethren, and also the two sons of Alma, Shiblon and Corianton. They were not afraid when the rich and powerful Zoramites threatened to hurt them, because they were teaching the true and straight ways of God. The rich men also wanted to kill the other, poor Zoramites who had finally heard the truth and were serving God in their hearts.

These new believers had to flee from their homeland because the evil

rich men had much money and power to persecute them. So they left their country and emigrated to the land of the Nephites in order to serve God. First they lived with the people of Ammon, and they eventually joined the Nephite armies to protect themselves and their fellow believers.

So there were new believers to love and care for the true things of God.

The evil, pretend worshippers started trying to talk the Lamanite nations into attacking the Nephites. Many battles did take place, but as always our Lord God helped those who were on His side. He protected them from evil, He delivered them from the hands of their enemies, and oh, how the people loved the Lord!

Sincerely,
Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

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LaGrange, KY Mission Visits Detroit, MI Branch 2

By Carolyn O'Connor

The brothers, sisters, and friends of Detroit, Michigan Branch #2 had the honor of hosting the members of the LaGrange, Kentucky Mission for an extraordinary weekend in May.

The weekend started on Friday evening when the brothers and sisters of Branch #2 met the three families; Obradovich's, Palacios's, and Brengle's from Kentucky. The families were welcomed into the homes of the hosting families and had the opportunity to fellowship and get to know one another even better. On Saturday afternoon, we all met at the branch for a pasta feast and an uplifting meeting.

Brother Alex Gentile welcomed the visitors and friends. Brother Doug Obradovich opened our meeting. He shared some of the blessings that they have experienced as members of such a small mission. He shared a parable with the message that loving yourself more than others and putting yourself first in all situations goes against the plan of God. "When given the choice to sin or not to sin and then sinning, we are choosing ourselves not the Lord." He spoke from the 22nd Chapter of Matthew when Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment of the law and Jesus replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Brother Doug ended by encouraging us to better know ourselves and our understanding of our position with God and then love Him more than ourselves.

All of those present, who were part of the Youth-In-Action tour to LaGrange and other areas last summer and the members of the LaGrange

Mission, came forward to sing a few hymns. Brother David Lovalvo, Area MBA President who was part of the group, then introduced the LaGrange members and their families. He then asked several to testify and share the blessing that they received being a part of the Youth-In-Action program. It was wonderful to hear the testimonies of the brothers and sisters.

Along with the uplifting feeling all felt throughout the service was a feeling of concern and sadness. Our newest addition to the Branch, Marissa Hamet, was in the hospital in serious condition after surgery to correct a malfunction of her liver. We received a call that Marissa was heading into surgery again and that the situation was serious. The brothers and sisters knelt in prayer and Brother Leonard Lovalvo asked the Lord to hear his cry and the cry of the brothers and sisters and save this little child.

Brother Duane Lovalvo and Sister Joyce Vargo left for the hospital. Brother Frank and Sister Shannon, Marissa's parents, grew concerned that they would not get there in time to anoint Marissa before surgery. In fact they knew it was physically impossible. As they wheeled her away and the doctors stepped into the elevator, a nurse realized that they forgot the chart in the room. By the time she got back, Brother Duane and Sister Joyce raced to the elevator and Brother Duane anointed Marisa on her way up to surgery. Even with the forgotten chart, it was a miracle that they made it in time. This is just one of many experiences that happened while Marissa was in the hospital for 28 days. The Lord answered our prayers and after many anointings over that weekend, Marisa started to improve. (She is home now but still in need of our prayers)

The following day we gathered again at the Branch for a special Sunday service. It was Mother's Day. Brother John DiBattista, visiting from Chicago, opened our meeting. He shared many experiences from his recent trip to Kenya. He shared some of the trials including illness that they experienced on the trip and how they knew that it was the evil one trying to stop them. "We are not wrestling

against flesh and blood but we are wrestling against spiritual evil trying to stop the work of God, trying to stop the Church, trying to stop the progress of the kingdom of God as it reaches all nations, kindred, tongue and people. We are not going to let it happen. We are going to fast and pray, anoint and love. We are going to embrace and lift up. We are going to do all that we can with all of the energy of our soul, so this Church continues to go forward."

Brother Doug followed. He encouraged all of us to share our testimony with others. "You are empowered with the Holy Spirit to touch on the greatness of Jesus Christ. Your call is not to listen to other testimonies, your call is to give *your* testimony."

After a time of testimony, many came forward to be anointed including our Brother Dominic Thomas who has been afflicted for several months. Although many came forward, the brothers still felt that there were more that needed to. Sacrament was served and our Brother Dominic addressed the congregation. He thanked us for all of our prayers on his behalf. "Your prayers have been our strength." He asked for continued prayer for both him and Sister Dolores. It was wonderful to hear the words of encouragement and praise from our Brother Dominic, who we missed terribly while he was too ill to come to church.

Sister Brenda Turley also asked for an opportunity to express herself before returning back to Calgary, Canada. The Turley's, Brother Rob, Sister Brenda, Nathan, Sister Alison, Jordan and Liam, have been members of Branch #2 for many years. Brother Rob had been unable to find a job that allowed the family to stay in the Windsor area and so recently the family moved to Calgary. Sister Brenda and Nathan were back for a visit and in need of prayers. They both had growths on their thyroids, which would need to be surgically removed.

Sister Brenda expressed herself asking to be anointed. She also asked that Nathan be anointed. She then shared an experience that Brother Rob had several weeks before they found

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LaGrange Visits Detroit

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out that both Sister Brenda and Nathan needed surgery. He had a dream and in this dream he saw a license plate that read Alma 2. When he awoke, he began to read Alma 2. Brother Rob and Sister Brenda discussed what they thought it meant. The chapter was about a war and they were unsure how specifically this pertained to them but knew that God would reveal its meaning to them.

Upon returning to Michigan, Sister Brenda was sharing some of the sorrow that she was feeling with Brother Dino DiMelis about their situations with their health and family matters. Brother Dino began to talk about a story in the Book of Mormon where the Lord had not eliminated the battle for the Nephites but strengthened them to overcome. Sister Brenda immediately recognized the scripture from Alma 2. The power of God came over her and she was comforted knowing that God is in the matter. She was thankful that He used Brother Dino to show her this.

When Nathan came forward to be anointed, he immediately began sobbing. After the prayer, he asked for his baptism. The saints rejoiced, especially his mother who could not have asked for a better Mother's Day present. It was decided that Brother Nathan would be brought to the water on Wednesday in lieu of our regular MBA service.

Many others were anointed and our meeting was brought to a close. After another wonderful meal, we began our tearful goodbyes to the brothers and sisters of the LaGrange Mission. Our thoughts and prayers followed them.

On Wednesday evening, the day before the Turley's were to return home, we gathered at the water's shore to witness the baptism of our Brother Nathan. He was baptized by Brother Duane Lovalvo and confirmed back at the branch by Brother Dino DiMelis.

Brother Nathan expressed himself. He started by saying "Wow, it feels great! When I came forward to be anointed, I felt the Spirit of God.

I sat down and it felt as if something was pressing down on my shoulders. My back was getting really hot. It was awesome! When Brother Alex asked me how I was feeling after the prayer, all I could say was that I wanted to be baptized."

We again shared tearful goodbyes. Our thoughts and prayers remain with the Turley family not only for their health but also for the continued strength and spiritual guidance that they need while being far from the fold.

It was an emotion-filled few days. We experienced much joy and some sadness, but most of all we experienced the true hand of God, His mercy and His awesome power.

Rededication in Bell, CA

By Sister Patty Kerby

The saints gathered in Bell, California on the weekend of June 7th and 8th, 2003. This weekend was planned for a rededication service, after many months of remodeling. Brother Otto Henderson opened our Sunday meeting in prayer. The Zioners then sang a beautiful selection for us. Brother Bob McDonnell opened our service with a brief history of the Bell Branch, with its humble beginnings in 1944, which first began in saint's homes. As time progressed, a small building was purchased along with the property. In 1953, they broke ground for the church building. In 1954, the building was dedicated, with Brother Jim Heaps as presiding elder.

Sister Christina Benyola then sang for us so beautifully, *On Holy Ground*. Brother Tom Liberto then spoke to us, thanking all those involved in the reconstruction of the building. He thanked all the dear brothers and sisters that have persevered throughout the history of the Bell Branch, many of who have gone on to their reward. He stated the phrase that is written on the plaque that hangs in the back of the church: "I was glad when they said, Let us go into the house of the Lord." He talked to us about the different levels that were in the

temples in Jerusalem and their meanings. He said that today all we need is a broken heart and a contrite spirit to come into God's house. He spoke of his early years in the Church, and how much his love has grown for the Church. He spoke of Jesus and how he was willing to shed His own blood for the building of His Church. He said that much labor has gone into the building of this branch, both naturally and spiritually. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone of our Church. As the saints of God, our spiritual building must be jointly fitted together. Everyone must do his or her part to keep the building in working order, both naturally and spiritually. As in rededicating this building, we must rededicate our lives in our service to God. Our work is not finished; there is so much work yet to do. He went on to tell us how much we need each other. We need to forgive one another, and love one another, but most of all, we must have the spirit of God with us. As we rejoice in the rededication of this building, we must rejoice more so in our rededication to the Lord.

Brother Lou Ciccati continued speaking to us. He started by saying, any place where God dwells is holy ground. He compared the building of the buildings as to the building of ships that God had instructed of in both Bible and Book of Mormon. He went on saying that we are on the Gospel ship. We have the tools to continue to build His Church, founded on the ROCK, JESUS. This church is holy ground, we must go to God daily in prayer and ask Him how to build ourselves spiritually, and how to use our compass (the word of God) to give us direction in our lives.

Brother Santos Zamora also spoke to us wonderful words in both Spanish and English. He spoke of the remodeling of the branch. But more so he spoke of the spiritual remodeling of the branch in recent years and how it has grown. A beautiful spirit was felt in his words as he went on to exhort us to share the Gospel with others so that our branches may continue to grow. The brothers and sisters of the Bell branch then sang us a few beautiful hymns in Spanish.

Brother Paul Vinsick also spoke

to us on the same theme. He asked us how strong is our spiritual house? We are the temple of God and we represent the Church wherever we go. He spoke of the love he felt when he first came to the Bell Branch.

Before Brother Rudy Meo offered the rededication prayer, he spoke to us. He told us, "Except the Lord build my house, it is built in vain." A beautiful prayer was then offered. At this time, some plaques of remembrance were handed out to those who had contributed much to the branch throughout the years. We then went into our sacrament service as Brother Justin Paxton sang for us, *Set Her Free*. A beautiful spirit was felt.

As God continued to bless us, some young sisters sang for us. The Zioners sang *Open My Eyes*. Sister Vanessa Watson sang in closing, *How Great Thou Art*. Brother Paul Liberto then closed in prayer.

Our dear sisters prepared a wonderful lunch as we continued to fellowship with the saints. What a wonderful blessed day in the Lord!

Mind Be in You

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himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross." Not only did the Lord rid himself of heavenly glory, but also He gave His life completely to the purposes of God and becoming the salvation of the world. Jesus said, "*My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish the work*" (John 4:34).

Paul the Apostle is instructing us not only to have the mind of Christ in us, but provided insight into how the mind of Christ worked. The mind of Christ was completely focused on being obedient to the will of the father and completing His mission of salvation for all mankind. Nothing could deter Christ from completing, obeying and executing the Divine Will of God. The single objective in His life was a desire to obey God while possessing unconditional, unquenchable love for His servants. This is the "mind" Paul

is instructing us to possess. Complete and total submission to God's will. This "mind" in us brings power, love and oneness with God just as it did with Jesus Christ. Possessing this mind allows us to please God in all things.

But, Paul was not finished with his instruction. We serve a consistent and loving God. When we obey the Lord there is always a reward. In verses nine through eleven, Paul identifies the great reward heaped upon our Lord, as the one and only Lamb of God. Because of all the Lord had done and His unwavering obedience to God, "*Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.*" For the Lord's effort on behalf of mankind, He was given a name above all others. Good or evil, all men will bow to the Lord and confess Him as the Son of God.

These verses (10,11) teach us that the same reward – being exalted by God – is available if Christ's mind is in us. Like Christ, our minds must be governed by the will of God and our desire to do His will must be first above all else. It is recorded in the Epistle of James, "*For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that*" (James 4:15). All influences in our lives other than the will of Christ must be silenced and the Lord must have full sway in leading us to fulfill His purposes. When we do this, very much like the Lord, our lives will be exalted in power, righteousness and love. The rewards of those who possess the mind of Christ are referred to in the first Psalm. It is written, "*...and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper*" (Psalm 1:3).

There are numerous examples throughout the Scriptures of those who were obedient to God, or possessed the mind of the Lord. Those who did so were exalted and given great names that live on to this day, as examples of righteousness to which we all can strive. Abram and Sarai were commanded to "*walk before God and be perfect*" (Genesis 17:1). In being obedient to this commandment, their names were changed to Abraham, a

father of multitudes and Sarah, mother of nations. David, by obedience to God, was reminded that God, "*...took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people and over all Israel: And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth*" (II Sam 7:8,9). The Lord told Simon Peter that his name would become Cephas, meaning a stone (John 1:42). On the day of Pentecost, when Peter received the Holy Ghost, he fulfilled this promise by following God the remainder of his days. Peter's ministry was exalted and under the direction of God, he led thousands to the Lord during his life. Finally, the writings of Moroni teach us that those who are obedient to the call of God and are baptized were to be numbered among God's people.

"Their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God" (Moroni 6:4).

As we rightly divide these verses, it is clear Christ's mind must be in us. To possess the mind of Christ, we must follow the example of our Lord, humble ourselves and completely submit to God's will. The drive to do God's will must be above all else. In return, the promise of God is that He will exalt us as He did His son.

There remain prophetic events that belong to our Church and are yet to be fulfilled. We long for the dawning of Zion and the promulgation of the Gospel throughout the world. We retain a hope of seeing Joseph embrace their heritage and follow after Jesus Christ. In order for these events to occur, we must be filled with righteousness and the power of God, even as Jesus and His disciples were while on the earth. Like the early Church, our will must be swallowed up in the desire to do what God wants of us. When, as a Church, we collectively take on the mind of Christ, then as Paul promised, we will see the Church exalted in power. People will

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Mind Be in You

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marvel at what they see and nothing will stop them from joining our ranks, even as they did in days of old. This is our destiny! *"And it came to pass that I, Nephi beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory"* (1 Nephi 14:14). As we possess the mind of Christ and obey it in all things, this day will surely come to pass. May God bless us each as we strive to obey the will of God.

Open Door in Nepal

Continued from Page 2

music sung by a special choir of flying angels (Revelations 14:6). The music wrenched my heart from the top of Zion to the depth of the river down below. The 24 baptismal elders were singing the song of Zion saying, "Holy, holy holy! Is the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:3) and "Worthy is the lamb" (Revelations 5:12). I stopped here very gently and humbly. My soul was singing a melancholy strain to save the lost at any cost because the cost of each soul is higher than any price. The choir was so profound as it was overflowing with the sound of God's Word.

The light of the Lord was so shiny and bright that the darkness could not hover around there. All the people were required to be baptized in order to cross the river to get to the pathway to Mount Zion. Some of them accepted the baptism faithfully and the Holy Spirit led them to cross the river and conquer Mount Zion. But some of them denied the baptism because it was so icy and cold, as they were very cold in spirit, faith and obedience. Rather, they decided to go back to their homes and denied the Gospel.

I saw the queue of people representing all nations, kindreds and tongues. It was proof to me that they were the remnants of God gleaned from all over the world. I saw the queue of people representing the lost tribes of Israel. It proved the scriptures to me that are written in the Book of Mormon. I was so happy to see the queue of saints as they were washed by the blood of the Lamb. Obviously, they were wearing the white and pure clothes of salvation. They were singing the song as follows:

I have decided to follow Jesus (3 times).

No turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me (3 times).

No turning back, no turning back.

Though none go with me, still I will follow (3 times).

No turning back, no turning back.

I will love my Lord with all my heart (3 times).

No turning back, no turning back.

I have decided with all my heart to follow Jesus (3 times).

No turning back, no turning back.

My heart was so full of compassion for those who rejected the baptism, though. I asked the Lord why they were returning home. The Lord told me, "Many are called but few are chosen" (Matthew 20:16, 2nd Peter 1:10). "Those who are returning home are not the ones truly committed. They are colder than ice in their heart. They have a form of godliness but they deny the power thereof; from such turn away. Do not worry about them. Their reward is already prepared that they will fall down into a chasm where there is an everlasting danger of hell. They will fall down into the bottomless pit. There will be gnashing of teeth."

Then I asked, "Why do some people reject thy Gospel, Lord?" The spirit of God advised me, "God's call to come to Mount Zion is a free and open door to all. But there are many adversaries to the people. This is the plain

and flat matter of 'believe or not.' "...Whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). These are the same people who disbelieved Moses' brazen serpent on the pole for healing (Numbers 21). These are the same people who cannot believe that Jesus died for their sins to pay a ransom once and for all (Matthew 20:28; Romans 5:8). These are the same people who rejected the prophets of old such as Lehi as he was exhorting to hold fast to the rod of iron. Likewise, Nephi, Samuel the Lamanite, Ammon, Moroni, the brother of Jared, and many other messengers were ignored. Remember, Jesus said that all the prophets prophesied of Jesus."

How did Moses reveal Jesus? What did it mean? What was significant about Moses and the brazen serpent?

• *"And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole: and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived"* (Numbers 2:6-9).

Jesus compared himself to the brazen serpent:

• *"And Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"* (John 3:14)

What does the Book of Mormon plainly explain about Moses and the brazen serpent?

• *"Yea, did he not bear record, that*

the Son of God should come? And as he lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, even so shall he be lifted up who should come" (Helaman 8:14).

• *"Behold, he was spoken of by Moses; yea, and behold, a type was raised up in the wilderness, that whosoever would look upon it might live. And many did look and live. But few understood the meaning of those things, and this because of the hardness of their hearts. But there were many who were so hardened that they would not look; therefore they perished"* (Alma 33:19-20).

I shared the above-mentioned dream during Sunday School at our Atlanta, Georgia Branch. It was highly accepted by everyone there. Then, Evangelist Ken Staley and other elders prayed and anointed me for the dream to come true in Nepal. The brothers also added more confirmation on this dream of baptisms and the journey to Mount Zion. Specifically, Brother Joel Gehly brought forth a supporting message:

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord'" (Isaiah 2:1-5).

In that Sunday Service, the spirit of God inspired Brother John DiBat-

tista that the dream I saw was really genuine. He mentioned in truth that I had had to go through all kinds of trials and perils ever since I became a member of The Church of Jesus Christ, such as the breast cancer and healing for my wife, the loss and grief of my son, Subas, persecutions of my family members, and several trials in my life in America. He also mentioned that I got the Gospel through a long journey away from my home country to Arizona.

Yes, I really searched for The Church of Jesus Christ without knowing where I was going. Brother John's remarks were so true that I discovered The Church of Jesus Christ (Monongahela, PA), through long research while at the University of Arizona library as I was doing my PhD work on the side. I strongly believe that it was because of God's plan and leading and not my own.

Brother Mark Kovacic made a very interesting remark about my dream. He said that he liked the dream of going onto the spiritual mountaintop of Zion instead of the tallest mountain-top of Mount Everest, which is in Nepal. In fact, climbing Mount Zion is absolutely the most important task rather than climbing Mount Everest. We are more than conquerors if we climb Mount Zion (Romans 8:37). Also, Brother Mark said that the door of the Gospel is already open for Nepal. He opened the scripture as follows to support the open door of the Gospel:

"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Revelations 3:7,8).

Here an open door, as well as a shut door, is brought to view. Likewise Brother Art Gehly, Sr., made the remark that he loved the word of God from Isaiah regarding Mount Zion as it says, *"...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"* (Isaiah 2:3).

After the service was over, I started to think and pray in my soul that I must go to Nepal this coming

summer as soon as possible. I strongly feel that the promise of God is inspiring me by and by as is written:

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

Besides this scripture, I find more joy and assurance in the following old gospel song in German:

Fear not, O little flock, the foe
Who madly seeks your overthrow;
Dread not his rage and power;
What though your courage sometimes faints?
His seeming triumph over God's saints
Lasts but a little hour.

In conclusion, by far, it is very important to venture on this long awaited mission to Nepal. Since most of the lands in Nepal and its vicinity to the Himalayan nations such as Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Northeast India, are the lands of unreached Nepalese, Tibetan, and Mongolian people. Now it is very important to labor in the harvest of God. By far, the long-labored Book of Mormon in Nepali is also ready to be printed soon. The official members of this Church have been instrumental not only in translating the Book of Mormon but also the Holy Bible as well. By far, we have greatly been persecuted and there have been imprisoned members and non-members of the past and present. By far, we have a number of Nepalese citizens officially baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ (Monongahela, PA). By far, we have a great number of people in various little flocks (Luke 12:32) waiting and praying for the official reception of the Gospel and baptism through The Church of Jesus Christ. Thus and therefore, I urge the members and leaders of our precious Church to fast and pray for this meticulous task.

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore that Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2).

At the end, I humbly request that you fast and pray for the grand plan of the missionary work in Nepal. I really appreciate your fervent prayers.

Children Blessed

Xzavier Orion Sciarretta, son of Natalie Sciarretta and Jared Kelly, was blessed on June 1, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch.

Victoria Nicole Sciarretta, son of Valerie Sciarretta and Michael Yerman was blessed on June 1, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch.

Abigail Grace Lonkert, daughter of Mickey and Melissa Lonkert was blessed on May 25, 2003 in the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch.

Luke Tristan Markley, son of Bret and Celeste (Amormino) Markley was blessed on May 18, 2003 in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch.

Samuel Anthony Giannetti, son of Brother Joe and Sister Tina Giannetti was blessed on May 18, 2003 in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas Branch.

Sophia Claire Giannetti, daughter of Brother Joe and Sister Tina Giannetti was blessed on May 18, 2003 in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas Branch.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Brother Nicholas James Zophi was baptized on May 25, 2003 at the Sterling Heights Michigan Branch. He was baptized by Brother John Straccia and confirmed by Brother Sam Cuomo.

Sister Francis Christina Haley was baptized on June 8, 2003 at the Sterling Heights Michigan Branch. She was baptized by Brother Lou Vitto and confirmed by Brother Sam DiFalco.

Brother Jared Patrick Cummings was baptized on June 8, 2003 at the Sterling Heights Michigan Branch. He was baptized by Brother Sam Cuomo and confirmed by Brother John Straccia.

Brother Luis Carillo was baptized on June 15, 2003 at the Freehold, New Jersey Branch. He was baptized by Brother Mario Morales and confirmed by Brother Joseph Perri.

Sister Telma Carillo was baptized on June 15, 2003 at the Freehold, New Jersey Branch. She was baptized by Brother Mario Morales and confirmed by Brother Jim Crudup.

Brother Richard Gonzalez was baptized on June 8, 2003 in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch. He was baptized by Brother Gary Champine and confirmed by Brother Steve Champine.

OBITUARIES

ELEANOR SPROUL

Sister Eleanor Sproul passed on to her reward on April 18, 2003. She was preceded in death by her parents, Apostle Alma B. Cadman and Sister Lavina Cadman as well as seven brothers and sisters. She is survived by two daughters; Shirley Kather and Patricia Stainbrook and their families; and her brother, Apostle Russell Cadman.

HAZEL (McCRARY) ZOLTEK

Sister Hazel (McCrary) Zoltek of the Sterling Heights, Michigan Branch, passed on to her reward on May 14, 2003. She was preceded in death by her husband Frank Zoltek, and sons Ronald and Joe McCrary. She is survived by her daughters Nancy Burgher and Margaret McCormick; son, Dan McCrary; as well as 7 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great grandchildren.

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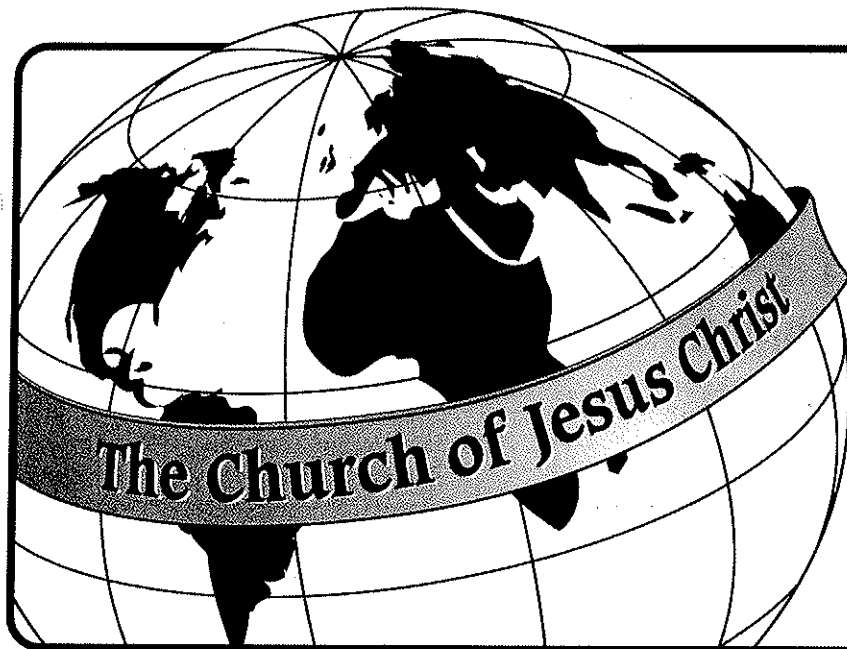
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Corrections

Sister Donna Baez was ordained a Deaconess in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch on March 30, 2003. Her feet were washed by Sister Rachel Mora and she was ordained by Brother Peter Scolaro.

Brother Guy Karelli of the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to his reward on April 26, 2003. He is survived by one son and daughter-in-law, Guy A. and Joelle Karelli, and one grandson, Jason Karelli. He was preceded in death by his wife, Sister Mary Jo Karelli.



The Gospel News

World Headquarters Monongahela, PA, USA

September, 2003

Volume 58, No. 9

GMBA Conference in the Pacific Coast Area

By Brother Paul Liberto

Several years ago, the membership of the General Missionary Benevolent Association voted to hold conferences in every GMBA Area of the Church. After many months of planning and much anticipation, the GMBA held its first-ever Conference in San Diego, California, on May 17-18, 2003. Attendance was good with members coming from throughout the Pacific and Southwest Areas, as well as from many other Areas of the GMBA.

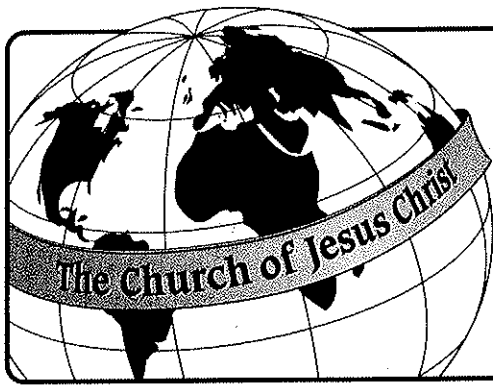
The event was very enlightening for those who had never attended a conference, as they gained a greater understanding of the purposes, goals and achievements of the GMBA. Some were surprised to know that the GMBA has raised \$100,000 to be used for a Missionary Training Center at the World Conference Center. Others were impressed to know that the GMBA will soon achieve its goal of raising \$50,000 for printing of The Book of Mormon in foreign languages and that over \$75,000 was raised to support the 1999 World Missionary Conference.

President, Brother Paul A. Palmieri and his officers were very organized in conducting the various business items. Reports were presented by all officers and committees on the status of finances, activities and projects. The conference approved the following expenditures: \$5,000 to the San Carlos, Arizona mission house; \$8,000 to the Youth In Action committee; \$1,000 to the FENCE committee; \$1,257 to the Campout Procurement committee; and \$1,500 to purchase a laptop computer for GMBA use. A GMBA Special Projects fund goal of \$250 per local and a limit of \$300 per occurrence for relief were set for the next six months.

It was noted that the GMBA was organized at Roscoe, PA, in May of 1904, by Brother Alexander Cherry. A committee was formed to plan the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the GMBA in May, 2004, at a location to be determined. The 2004 GMBA Campout will return to Saginaw, Michigan, in July 2004 and Northern Arizona or Florida are being considered for the 2005 Campout.

It is fitting to end this report by thanking God for the GMBA. It is nice to know that over the years the GMBA has raised a great deal of money and has assisted the Church in so many ways. However, it is impossible to measure the impact the MBA has had in the lives of hundreds of young people. It is the MBA that develops leadership in our local areas. It is the MBA that sponsors Youth In Action events to provide personal growth for participants and spiritual support for recipients. It is the MBA that has provided spiritual settings where many have been baptized. It is the MBA that provides an opportunity for young people to develop life-long friendships. Thank God for Brother Cherry's inspiration and for the many brothers and sisters who have followed as officers and participants in this wonderful organization. It is truly a blessing to see the youth getting involved in the work of the Church.

If you are not supporting your Local and Area MBA activities please give them a try. And, if you have not attended a GMBA Conference lately, please plan to do so. Your life may be changed and you are sure to receive a blessing by being with the youth of the Church!



A message from the Seventy

it through baptism.

The Sunday morning services began with singing and special group selections, which was followed by a preaching service. Brother Paul Liberto opened the service. He was followed by Brother Paul A. Palmieri and Brother Tom Jones. The Penn-Mid Atlantic Ladies' Circle donated a Communion set, and prior to the blessing, Brother Isaac Smith spoke about Communion and its significance.

(Continued on Page 10)

A Gathering in Peru

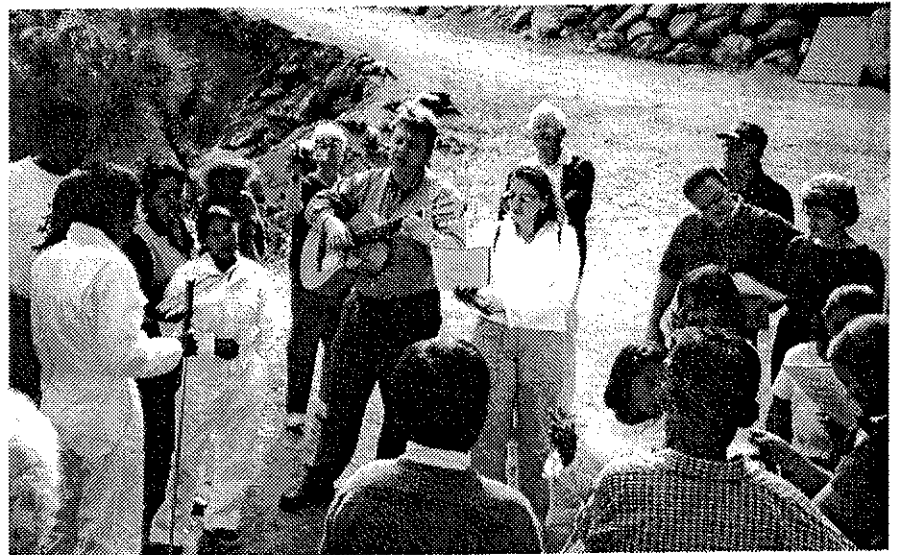
By Evangelist Dick Christman

Apostle Isaac Smith, Evangelists Paul Liberto, Dick Christman, and Miguel Bicelis, along with Brothers Paul A. Palmieri, Tom Jones, and Juan Mestas, totaled seven ministers at the Sunday, May 4, 2003, Church service in Arequipa, Peru. Brother Juan was overjoyed to have six other ministers with him as he usually has the sole responsibility of the Sunday morning services for the Arequipa, Peru Mission.

A group of brothers and sisters from the United States toured Peru and Bolivia, visiting ancient archeological sites and ruins, as well as a number of tribal groups along the way. They scheduled their tour of Peru to include a weekend with the saints in Arequipa. In addition to the brother ministers mentioned, we were pleased to have Sisters Bonnie Smith, Tava Jones, Nancy Gehly, Janet Ostreicher and her husband, Peter, along with Brother Ishmael Humphrey and Sisters Jan Humphrey and Becky Rogolino. They brought a number of different useful items for everyone in attendance, and they enjoyed the fellowship of the saints and our friends in Arequipa.

We were blessed with two baptisms on Saturday morning. On Saturday afternoon we had seminars for the various age groups. We concluded the day with a discussion and refreshments.

Brother Isaac related a dream he had regarding those being associated with the Gospel but not accepting



Brother Miguel Bicelis leading the singing at the baptisms.



Apostle Isaac Smith addressing the congregation.

Missionary Travel – Nepal 2003

Blessings and Reality: The Whole Story

By Evangelist Joel Gehly

struggle for about 30 minutes to get a car to take us to the hotel. Finally we get to a very comfortable and clean hotel. My internal body clock is way off and I can only sleep about 3 hours. We are up at 6 a.m. for a very exciting day.

Blessing – As we arrive in Kathmandu, we are met by a group of Christian believers at the airport. They are happy and very excited to

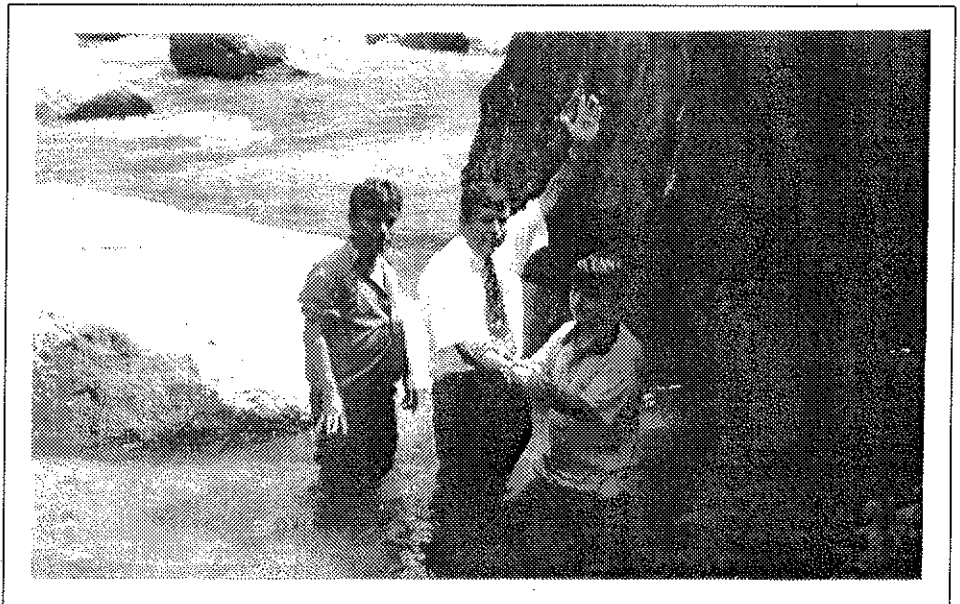
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Reality – Of course, there is the preparation and the packing. Going to the doctor and making sure all the immunizations are up-to-date. Getting a prescription for Larium (anti-malaria) pills. One pill each week for two weeks before the trip, one pill each week during the trip, and one pill each week for four weeks after the trip. Working with the travel agent on tickets. Getting travel insurance. Making sure all appropriate paperwork for the family is up-to-date and telephone numbers for the family are posted on the refrigerator. At work, my boss resigns two days before leaving for Nepal - added uncertainty. Packing a few clothes, but stuffing the suitcases with materials, Books of Mormon, Church literature, candy for the children, a few gifts, etc. Each suitcase must be 70 pounds or less. At the airport, one bag was 71 pounds and one bag was 68 pounds. A bag of candy was transferred from one suitcase to the other and all was OK. We were on our way.

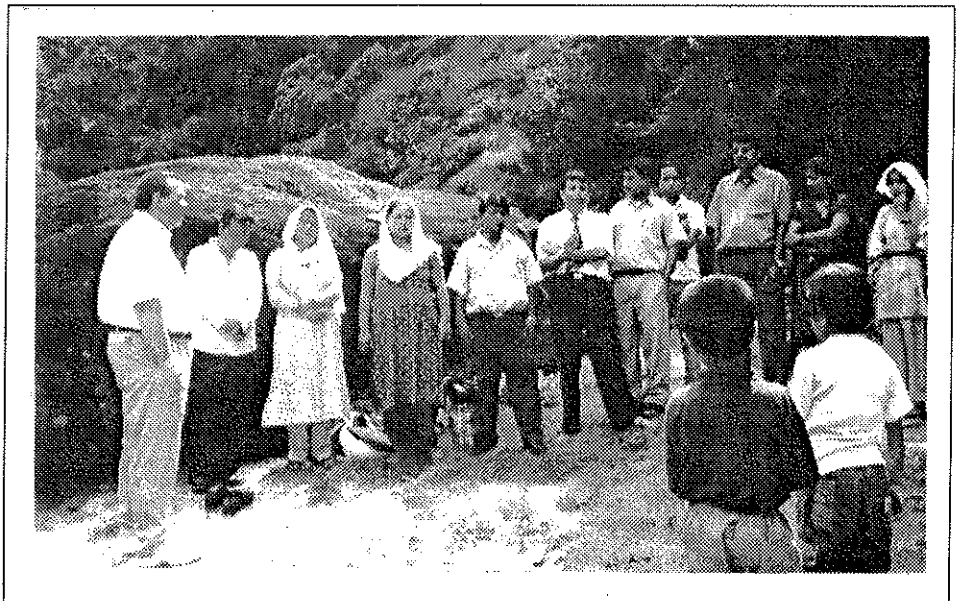
Blessing – It is an awesome privilege to have the opportunity to travel for The Church of Jesus Christ and share the Restored Gospel to a new nation and people. The fulfillment of Revelation 14: 6-7 is being accomplished as the Everlasting Gospel is going to a new nation, new kindred, new tongue, and new people. It is always a humbling feeling to have this privilege. Apostle Paul Palmieri is at the airport to have a short visit with Evangelist Phil Jackson and me before we leave the country. This is an indescribable blessing as he prays for our families and us as we hold hands together in a circle at the airport.

Reality – The initial flight leaves Pittsburgh, PA at noon on July 3rd. We change planes in Minneapolis, MN, and once again in Tokyo, Japan. Finally, we arrive in Bangkok, Thai-

land about 12:30 a.m. local time on July 5th. It has been a long 26 hours in airplanes and about 36 hours since leaving home. All the flights have been full, but we both have been able to sleep a few hours. We change a few dollars into Thailand Bahts and



Brother Ram Baral baptizing near Kathmandu.



Preaching at the river's shore.

A Visit to the Venezuela Mission

June 19-23, 2003

By Evangelist Paul Liberto

As the brothers traveled to visit the Venezuela Mission, many thoughts ran through their minds. It had been over a year since the previous visit. Travel had not been advised because of natural disasters, political unrest and the threat of terrorism against American travelers. Were the baptized members of the Church still well? Had they remained faithful? Would the community still welcome visiting brothers? Was the potential for a flourishing mission still there?

These and other questions were the primary focus of Brothers Fred Olexa and Joseph Catone, Vice Chairman and Member of the Venezuela Committee, Brother Frank Palacios, Translator and Brother Paul Liberto, Chairman of the Americas Missionary Operating Committee, as they journeyed to Venezuela. They voiced great concern for the welfare of the Church there because they had been left alone for so long. They prayed fervently that all would be well.

About an hour after taking off from Miami, FL, the plane was ordered to return for a security check. Several hours later the brothers were again on their way to Caracas, Venezuela. They missed their connection in Caracas and were booked on another airline. They arrived in Barcelona, Venezuela too late to drive to the mission in Valle Guanape. The next day the brothers were met by Brother Raul Bicelis, our resident Teacher in Venezuela. They then drove two hours to Brother Raul's home. What a joy it was to be greeted by Brother Raul's wife, Sister Alicia. The brothers quickly learned that the seven members there are faithful and meet together regularly. Friday evening all of the members attended a service to give their testimonies and receive the Word of God. However, none of the visitors the brothers had met on earlier trips attended. The brothers were hopeful that they would come later.

The next day several families were

visited. The brothers were welcomed warmly and it was evident that the community remains interested in the Church. It was also clear that there is a great need for the people to have the Spirit of Christ in their lives. The people live at near poverty levels and there is little work. Many of the men travel to find work and leave their wives and children home alone, often to fend for themselves. There are many, many children. Several women wish to be baptized but they are living out of wedlock. The brothers encouraged them to counsel with Brother Raul to arrange to be legally married.

A lot of time was spent teaching

"... Brother Raul made trip after trip to bring the old, middle-aged and young. There were over 60 in attendance, and half of them were young people and children."

Brother Raul about the Church and discussing the work of the ministry. Brother Raul and Sister Alicia are tireless workers for the Church. They visit the members and visitors often. Brother Raul holds services every week and makes many trips in his 1972 Chevy Nova to pick everyone up. He is very well liked and respected by the community. Brother Raul and Sister Alicia could have remained in Caracas to live comfortably in an easier lifestyle. However, it is a blessing to see how they have dedicated themselves to remain living in the country without many of the conveniences and safety of the city in order to represent the Church. Saturday evening approximately 15 adults and 5 children at-

tended the service. Again, the brothers missed many of the visitors they had met on earlier trips and they continued to wonder if the community would embrace the Church in the long term.

The brothers continued to pray that new visitors would come to the Sunday service. Early in the morning Brother Raul began to make trips to pick up the worshippers. All of the expectations of the brothers were exceeded as Brother Raul made trip after trip to bring the old, middle-aged and young. There were over 60 in attendance, and half of them were young people and children. Many of the visitors were new to the Church and attended for the first time. There were several teenagers in attendance and they respectfully listened to all that was said. A few of the girls sang specially prepared songs to honor the visiting brothers. The brothers preached about the love of Christ, their vision for the future church in South America and how God can use all of them to bring peace and joy to their country. Four children were blessed, the sick were anointed, testimonies were given and songs of praise were sung. After the service, treats were provided for all and a joyful time of fellowship was shared. For a short while the children were happy and the unpleasantness of their lives was forgotten.

As the brothers traveled home they would take with them the knowledge that the potential for a flourishing mission in Venezuela is a reality. The people are hungering and thirsting for the peace of Christ in their lives. The children have a great need in their lives for stability and the love of a spiritual family. The brothers will continue to see the smiling faces of the children and remember the joy they exhibited in singing and fellowshiping together. They will remember the poverty and the hopelessness of the adults as they face the uncertainty of their existence. They will pray that God will call ministers there. They will pray that the Church will be used in a mighty way to bring hope and peace to the people of Valle Guanape. Please join them as they pray often for the "Great Work of the Lord" in all nations of the world!



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Be ye therefore followers of God; as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Ephesians 5:1-6).

The fearful thing about this scripture is that as we read the newspaper, watch our television or movies, or simply look around us, we see that fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking and jesting, and idolatry is everywhere. What is worse, is that this scripture instructs us not to be deceived by those who would say these things are okay. Today, not only are people saying that these things are okay, but discussions of right or wrong do not even occur anymore. These things are simply the norm. This is especially true of young people today who do not even think twice as to whether or not fornication is right or wrong. It is just something normal, that "everyone does." What is more frightening is that our young people in the Church, are accepting these things as "the way things are." This scripture states that a person like this; cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Simply put, it means they will spend eternity with Satan in hell. It also promises that in this life, the wrath of God will come upon the children of disobedience. Diseases that come about due to promiscuity reflect the punishment of God. Serious problems in life come about due to a greedy, selfish, covetous attitude. Marital destruction comes about due to idolatry—a man or woman who values something or someone more than they do their spouse.

If there was ever a time we need a revival, it is now! The Church was restored fully to show us the way. That "way" does not change with the times. God's commandments are the same regardless of the "way things are." It's a sobering thought to imagine what God is thinking about mankind today. It's an even more sobering thought to imagine what God thinks of His people today. We are buffeted on all sides by the world and by Satan's darts. If there was ever a time when we need to rely completely on God's help, it is now. Certainly, things in the world around us must change. I heard it said that if God permits things to continue as they are, he must apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah for destroying them. He must apologize to the people who were drowned at the time of Noah. But we read that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Things will change.

Instead of us being "deceived" into thinking these things are okay, let us be God's "change agents." A change agent is someone who initiates change. Let us be the peculiar person in the crowd. Let us proclaim that these things are wrong; not pointing a finger at other people, but pointing a finger at sin. Let us act "surprised" when others speak of these sinful things as normal. Let us say to them like Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Being a change agent means starting in our own homes. Let us teach our families the principles of Christ. Let us tell them that the things the world is saying is normal and okay, are NOT! Can you imagine what God will think of us if we do this! Imagine how pleased he will be with us. He will look at us and truly say that we are His "dear children" who follows Him. Let us be God's change agents in a world that is on the wrong path, and follow our Savior to that mansion that awaits us.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork



Remember and Perish Not

(Mosiah 4th Chapter)

At a party this month, I noticed another person. She was working hard on her goals and serving God. I felt jealous. I remembered years ago when I was going through a hard time and it felt like I was doing it by myself. Of course in truth, the people at church were praying constantly for me. I'd also been prayed on for strength so many times at church by our Elders.

But, it seemed like she had it easier and better than me. I felt like talking about her or putting her down. But recently I was studying the seven abominations to the Lord. I'd learned that God really hates someone who "soweth seeds [plants bad thoughts] of discord among the brethren [the Church people]." So I kept myself from saying any unkind thoughts about her to anyone else. I was afraid of displeasing the Lord. When I said my prayers that night I tried to put those bitter thoughts out of my mind. I did not talk them out with the Lord. I ignored my thoughts and could only pray lightly about other things. I was trying to avoid thinking about my sins of jealousy.

But the next day, in the car, I told my feelings of self-pity and jealousy to my husband. I even criticized this hard-working sister. He gently asked me, "Where do you think those

thoughts come from?" He said to me, "We are on our way to church to receive a big blessing and what do you think that old devil wants to do? He wants to disturb you and rob you of that blessing."

He was right. I started talking to the Lord. I asked him to forgive and help me over these "poor me" thoughts of discouragement, self-pity, and jealousy.

I remembered what I had been reading this week in Mosiah, 4th chapter, "And you will not have a mind to injure one another [including gossiping or criticizing someone to others] but [you will have a mind] to live peaceable and to render [give] to every man according to that which is his due...again, believe that you must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God; and ask in sincerity of heart that He would forgive you; and now if you believe all these things, see that you do them."

I prayed in my heart for forgiveness. I prayed even more that God would bless her and her family. These prayers chased away that disturbing mood. At church I went up to her with a loving heart and we talked. She never knew how I'd let that old devil make me feel jealous and critical; she was her same, nice self. She even asked me about a problem in my life and said she'd pray for me. I felt such a blessing and cleansing of worry. The peace of God was in my heart now.

How much love there is in this beautiful Church of Jesus Christ. How much forgiveness the Lord has for us.

And how much Jesus will help us when that sneaky old devil tries to pull us away from the peace of God. Just be honest and pray. Admit your angry, unhappy, sinful thoughts to God. Repent and start fresh.

We must do as King Benjamin said in Mosiah 4:30, "...this much I can tell you, that if you do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds,...you must perish. And now O man (and all people) remember and perish not."

With love,
Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

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Branch and Mission News

Ordination in Metuchen, New Jersey

On December 15, 2002, we rejoiced in the Lord as we witnessed the ordination of Brother Tom Goode into the office of a Teacher. Our meeting was opened by having the hymn *Silent Night* played on guitar and trumpets by the young men of our branch. We truly thought we had entered the gates of Heaven. Brother Anthony Vadasz offered the opening prayer and we knew the Lord was about to bestow His blessings upon us. Our branch was filled with visitors from all of our area branches. On this beautiful day, we had five visiting Elders and over 70 brothers, sisters, friends and children of the saints. Sisters Theresa Vadasz and Angela Reyes set the Lord's Table as Sister JoAnn Catalano sang *The Storehouse of the Lord*. We felt the Lord's presence as the table was being set.

Brother Phillip Arcuri opened our meeting and felt inspired to preach on how we are spiritually fed and how fortunate we are to have God and Christ in our lives to guide us. He spoke on the promise of eternal life and how in the world we live in, we need the Lord more than ever. Brother Phil recited scripture from Ether 4:11, the faith of the brother of Jared and how we exercise our faith. Brother Phil posed the question, "How much do we put into our service to God?" We should be working for the Lord 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All good things come from God when we are faithful in our service to Him. Brother Jim Crudup followed asking, "Must Jesus bear the cross alone?" Jesus paid a price for us, so we can walk in a newness of life. He stated that the world watches us every day in all that we do, they ask why our church is so small, and our answer should be that Christ always dealt with the small. Jesus came into this world in a humble and meek way.

Brother Jim Sgro followed saying that we must step into the Spirit of God. He stated the Philistines stole the Arc of the Covenant but could not hold onto it because they were an unholy denomination. Brother Jim stated that within the past few weeks we have had several ordinations in our Region and that these brothers and sisters have become workers for the Lord and have taken a greater responsibility to work for the Lord. He talked of how Moses was told to charge 70 people to work for the Lord. We should step into our heritage of working for the Lord in whatever He calls us to do, whether to be a member, a Deacon, Deaconess, Teacher, Elder, Evangelist or an Apostle.

Brother Joe Perri followed and talked about how the Gospel was spread in the Atlantic Coast Region. He also talked about his recent experiences in Nigeria and how eager the young people there are to work for the Lord. Brother Joe stated that we need to talk to people around us; many are dissatisfied with the world today and are searching for something to hold onto.

Brother David Catalano followed and discussed the duties of a Teacher. He read from 1st Timothy that Teachers are to assist the ministry. A Teacher's responsibility is to teach others of Jesus. He then read from the 3rd chapter of Moroni and told of how we ordain Teachers and what their duties are. We ordain by the power of the Holy Ghost. Brother David then addressed the ministry and asked whoever felt inspired to wash Brother Tom's feet should come forth. Brother Ken Lombardo knelt before our brother and washed his feet, asking the Lord to bless him as he takes on this duty as a Teacher. The ministry then encircled our brother and Brother Anthony Vadasz offered a prayer that one of the Elders would be moved upon to ordain Brother Tom. Brother Jim Sgro then ordained Brother Tom into the office of a Teacher.

Brother David then opened the meeting for testimony and asked those who had experiences relating to Brother Tom's ordination to relate them. Sister Terry Goode related an experience she had one evening while

listening to Brother Tom pray before retiring to bed. A voice spoke to her and said, "Surely he is a worker for the Lord." Sister Michelle Burns related several experiences she had in reference to Brother Tom. Sister Angela Reyes had a vision during the service of two lights in front of the building and young people coming up to the lights and kissing each one. When Brother Tom's feet were being washed, the lights were placed upon his head and mouth. Then the lights completely covered him as he was being ordained. We rejoiced in what the Lord had given us this day.

Tampa, Florida

By Brother Peter Benyola

The Holy Spirit blessed the Tampa, Florida Branch several times on Sunday, July 22, 2003 — and particularly through anointings. After a Native American woman named Marie dropped her husband off at a church of another faith, she felt compelled to visit our branch. We were indeed blessed to have the Seed of Joseph in our presence as she listened to the words of the Ministry from 2nd Peter, a message on the importance and power of focusing on Jesus Christ. When the Ministry extended the invitation for anointings, she was overwhelmed by the Spirit and emotion, and revealed her concerns and troubles to the elders. She meekly approached the pulpit and requested prayer for spiritual strength because of the strong feeling she had to visit our Church, and also on behalf of her husband and the commitment she has to their marriage.

Also visiting this day was Brother George Benyola, Jr. and his sons. Joshua, the oldest, also came under the hands of the Ministry for an ailment upon his ears, for which he has had numerous doctor visits and several surgeries, due to a loss of hearing. Brother Phil Benyola, Sr. anointed him, pleading for the Lord for a healing and

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Tampa, Florida

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for Josh to arise and say, "I can hear." No sooner had the closing prayer ended and the elders barely stepped from the rostrum, Josh approached Brother Phil and exclaimed, "I can hear!"

"We have another announcement," Brother Phil said. "Tell them what you just told me, Josh." Josh repeated, "I can hear!" Praise God!

The anointings continued. In her testimony, Sister Linda Benyola requested anointing for God's protection with surgery she had to have this week. She spoke of her recent visit to the hospital and related an incident in which her IV inadvertently fell out of her arm and she was not receiving the sedatives prescribed. She tried and tried but could not get the attention of any of the physicians to attend to the bag which had fallen to the floor. But because she was awake, she was able to notice that the tag attached to her wrist did not bear her name. Soon thereafter, several attendants arrived to prep her for hip surgery! There is nothing wrong with Sister Linda's hip! The woman in the next bed was there for hip surgery. This mistaken identity happened three times and at that point her husband, Brother Phil, insisted that she be moved to another room in order to protect her from a serious medical error. All glory to God for letting that IV fall out. God surely moves in mysterious ways to protect His children from harm's way.

Immediately at the conclusion of Sister Linda's testimony, Sister Annabel Santilli stood, and raising her hand looking down directly at Sister Linda, uttered through the Holy Spirit, "Thus saith the Lord, my sister, go in peace this day. I have been with you all your life and I will continue to be with you, thus saith the Lord."

Once again, we must say, "Praise God." When the elders approached Marie at the close of the service, she again was overcome with the Spirit of the Lord. What a blessing it was to have her with us. She is planning an extended trip to Texas and Ohio and we provided contact information for

her. Our hope is that she will find the Lord through one of our branches.

We are reminded once again how the Lord directs, protects, and watches over us all. Occasionally we are reminded directly. God is so good.

It Was Good To Be in the House of the Lord

By Brother John Bordeaux

Sunday July 6, 2003, was a glorious day in the Herndon, Virginia Branch. The pews were full, we had three visiting elders who conducted the meeting, and the Spirit of God was in His house. Though the scripture states that where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, He will be in the midst of them, it sure felt good being surrounded by many saints with God in our presence.

Brother Chuck Kogler opened using the theme *direction*. He related several passages of scripture where God gave directions/instructions to man. When the directions were followed, matters went well, and when they weren't, things went badly. The first situation involved Jonah. Since we all know the story, let's think about how it applies to our lives. Those of us who have children know that when we tell them to do something, we don't want back talk – we want instructions followed immediately and with at least some enthusiasm. Likewise, when God gives us instructions we should obey without having to be told a second time. The second and third situations involved Noah in building the ark and Nephi's instruction to build the ship. These men followed God's direction and attained the goals established by God.

Brother Rick Scaglione followed expounding on the fact that the sailors on the ship with Jonah knew that something was wrong when the violent storm struck. These were men of the sea and were familiar with the weather patterns. There had been no indications of a brewing storm, so something must have been amiss. When the crew realized that Jonah was the source of

the problem, they asked him why he was doing the opposite of what God told him to do. Of course Jonah was finally cast overboard and swallowed by a great fish. The sea was then calmed. God showed mercy, and after three days the fish vomited Jonah out on the dry land. While Jonah got a second chance, we are not always assured one. Might not we be cast overboard and into outer darkness if we fail to follow God's direction?

Brother Lawrence King wrapped up the preaching by admonishing us not to serve other gods. We serve the same God as Jonah, and we want to reach the destination God has set for us. In order to do that we must follow God's directions given in the scriptures. Brother Lawrence assured us that our God is a living God and will not leave us high and dry. He gave examples of how the prophet Daniel

"As saints bore their testimonies, the same theme, direction, ran through them.

Sometimes we have the right map, but we read it wrong. Let us put our faith in God and He will get us back on the right path."

was delivered from the lion's den and the Israelites were delivered up out of Egypt. Brother Lawrence said that God wants us to come to Him and He will take care of us. He then spoke of some of his tribulations of the past year and how God has been with him. Again, we serve a living God, and there is nothing comparable.

As saints bore their testimonies, the same theme, *direction*, ran through them. *Sometimes we have the right map, but we read it wrong. Let us put our faith in God and He will get us back on the right path.*

Truly, it was good to be in the House of the Lord!

Why Mulek?

By Brother Mark Kovacic

Often we read the Scriptures and questions come to our mind, which is a good thing. It makes us seek out understanding from the LORD. One of these that came to me a few years back was, "Why Mulek?" What was his purpose in being in America? Why was he included in The Book of Mormon?

I would like to share with you some of my personal thoughts on this topic. Others may have already answered the above questions, however, it may be good to share these thoughts one more time.

Mulek, we are told in The Book of Mormon, was a son of King Zedekiah, the last king over the nation of Judah in ancient times (around 600 BC). He was the king who was conquered by the Babylonians and from which the seventy years of captivity for the Jews began. Mulek is named in The Book of Mormon, but not in the Bible. We are told in Mosiah 25:2, "Now there were not so many of the children of Nephi, or so many of those who were descendants of Nephi, as there were of the people of Zarahemla, who was a *descendant of Mulek*, and *those who came with him into the wilderness*." Interestingly, it appears that the writer at that time expected everyone to know who Mulek was, as there was no explanation. But later, in The Book of Mormon, some additional details come forth. In Helaman 6:10, it states, "Now the land south was called Lehi and the land north was called Mulek, which was after the son of Zedekiah; for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north, and Lehi into the land south."

So we go back a few years (and a few books) in The Book of Mormon and read of the discovery of the Mulekites, or as they were called, the people of Zarahemla. In Omni 1:15, 16, we are told, "Behold, it came to pass that Mosiah discovered that the people of Zarahemla came out from Jerusalem at the time that Zedekiah,

king of Judah, was carried away captive into Babylon. And they journeyed in the wilderness, and were brought by the hand of the Lord across the great waters, into the land where Mosiah discovered them; and they had dwelt there from that time forth."

From all of these Scriptures we learn that Mulek was a son of Zedekiah and was brought to the land northward (in Nephite geography, not necessarily our geography) with others from the land of Jerusalem, after passing through the wilderness.

We know Mulek to be a descendant of Judah, a Jew, based on the genealogy of the Bible. Zedekiah (whose real name was Mattaniah) was the son of Josiah. (It just so happens that Josiah was one of the most righteous kings that Judah ever had.) Josiah's lineage directly comes from King David. His genealogy is easy to follow in the Old Testament, even back to Judah, fourth son of Jacob.

But the Bible states that the Babylonians killed all of King Zedekiah's sons right in front of him (see 2 Kings 25:7)! But were they? Two points need to be made here. First, if one of Zedekiah's sons was missing from the line-up, he surely would not have spoken up and said, 'By the way, you missed one.' Absurd. As well, the writers may have knowingly conspired to give the appearance that all of the sons were killed, or actually did not know that one survived. In either case, their silence protected the lineage of David and performed the will of God.

For the case of one son escaping to have occurred we should see some example of it in the Scriptures. Let's look at 1 Kings 11:14-18. Here is an episode where God specifically spares the son of a king of Edom so that later in life he could be an adversary for King Solomon. This man was actually a small child (Hadad was his name) when he was carried off by his father's servants into the wilderness and eventually to Egypt. Joab, the commander of King David's army was in Edom for six months, killing all of the males and, so he thought, all of the king's sons. Instead, one unknowingly escaped with help from the household of the king.

With this example, or as we like to say, type and shadow, of Hadad, it should come as no surprise that it occurred again a few years later. If we have established the possibility of a child being carried off unawares, the next question is why?

One answer is clearly stated in The Book of Mormon, in Helaman 8:21, "And now will you dispute that Jerusalem was destroyed? Will ye say that the sons of Zedekiah were not slain, all except it were Mulek? Yea, and do ye not behold that the seed of Zedekiah are with us, and they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem?"

This scripture explains that where Laman and Lemuel doubted the destruction of Jerusalem (see 1 Nephi 17:20-22, 43), Nephi, son of Helaman, used the presence of the Mulekites (people of Zarahemla) as evidence of the destruction of Jerusalem. If, like Lehi, the Mulek colony rested a few days journey outside of Jerusalem, they would have heard the news that is written in 2 Kings 25:10 regarding the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem.

But what other reason could be given for Mulek's presence in America. In Brother Timothy Dom Bucci's book, *American Indian Moses* (reprinted 2002), he refers in chapter 10, page 56, to two prophecies of Mulek coming to America. One prophecy was given one hundred or so years before his departure and one from a prophet in captivity. Let's look at those.

Through the words of Isaiah, the LORD told King Hezekiah, "And the remnant that is *escaped* of the house of Judah shall yet again *take root* downward, and bear fruit upward. For *out of Jerusalem* shall go forth a *remnant*, and they that *escape* out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this (2 Kings 19:30, 31). This Scripture clearly indicates that the Lord planned to spare some of Judah from the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Babylonians.

But this is not all. The LORD also spoke through Ezekiel. He stated, "Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high

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Why Mulek?

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cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent. In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell" (Ezekiel 17:22, 23).

It is clear that the "highest branch of the high cedar" represents the royal family of Judah, i.e., the king and his household. Also, that the "tender one" of the "young twigs" means a child of that family.

Over the years, many in the Church have noted that the land given to Jacob, which he gave to Joseph, was America, as shown in the following prophecy (Jacob's blessing upon Joseph): "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the *utmost bound of the everlasting hills*: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren (Genesis 49:26).

Which land has a great mountain range that reaches from one end to the other? Only America has that distinction. If we look at the mountain range that stretches from Tierra del Fuego to Alaska, we can clearly see the extent of the "utmost bound of the everlasting hills." Therefore, it is easy to see that the "tender one" that would be planted in a "high mountain and eminent" meant America.

The prophecy also states that many fowls would take refuge under the branches of this "goodly cedar." One of the interesting changes of events in The Book of Mormon, was the combining of the righteous Nephites under the reign of Mosiah I and the people of Zarahemla, the descendents of Mulek. Two writers, Amaleki and Mosiah II clearly note that the people of Zarahemla were more numerous than the Nephites who found them (see Omni 1:17, 19; Mosiah 25:2). Why is this fact impor-

tant? During the years of war and struggle of the Nephites with their adversary, the Lamanites, they needed any help they could get, as the Lamanites were always more numerous than the Nephites. Finding the Mulekites added greatly to their number and more importantly, their safety and security.

What did the Mulekites get out of this arrangement? An interesting part of Jacob's blessing on Judah (Genesis 49:11) was that "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes." This prophecy indicates that Judah, at some point, would benefit from the blessings of others (*binding the foal to the vine*) and to someone who was greatly blessed (*choice vine*). We know that the land of America was considered "choice above all other lands." When the Mulekites joined with the Nephites, they got a righteous king (Mosiah I), the records (gold and brass plates), the preserved language, a knowledge of God, and the prophecies (and hope) of the coming of the Son of God, all in a blessed and choice land.

One of the fascinating archeology discoveries, as noted in Brother Bucci's book (Chapter 17, page 127), was a stone found in Tennessee in 1885 by a group of archeologists. Brother Bucci wrote, "For years the scratching on the stone could not be deciphered, until the stone was turned right side up. Then the scratches became inscriptions and the language was recognized as Hebrew. The words? "For the land of Judah..." We see that there is a purpose in all things. Future events will only confirm the history and prophecies we have before us.

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Gathering in Peru

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Sister Antonia Cardenas was ordained a deaconess.

God's blessings were evident in the testimonies and the singing. We had an unusual blessing at the conclusion of our service when Brother Isaac Smith rose in the Spirit and began to sing in an unknown tongue. As he continued, the melody became evident

and all the elders arose together to sing the chorus to the song, *An Angel Came Down from the Mansions of Glory*. As we sang "O, Israel, O Israel, in all your abiding, prepare for the Lord when you hear these glad tidings," the Spirit affected all present. It was a memorable and inspiring occasion. We trust God will continue to bless the missionary efforts of the Church and hasten the day when Israel will come home led by Joseph.

Nepal 2003

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meet us and, as we greet one another, the weariness we feel is replaced with joy and anticipation. The Christian believers in this Hindu dominated country are incredibly dedicated to Jesus Christ. They are sincere humble people who are hungry for fellowship, hungry for scriptural teaching, and hungry for the Church. As we meet together for a few minutes at the hotel they have arranged for us, we feel God's spirit as we talk and discuss the activities for our visit.

Reality – Christians are persecuted in Nepal. The government is a strictly Hindu kingdom. Openly professing Christianity and sharing the testimony of Jesus Christ is against the law in Nepal. Frequently, Christians are beaten and imprisoned. If convicted by the government, the typical prison sentence is seven years, many times with frequent beatings to try to obtain the names of other Christians. However, there are many small "fellowships" of Christian believers scattered all over Nepal. As it was in the early Christian church after the resurrection of Christ, it appears to be the same here in Nepal; the Christians are scattered around the country, they are incredibly committed and dedicated, and they continue to grow in number.

Blessing – As we met on a mountain hillside along a cold rushing

stream, the Lord was present with us. We had driven about 45 minutes out of Kathmandu to find a semi-private area to baptize the first converts to The Church of Jesus Christ. One by one, a total of ten souls rendered obedience to the commandment of Christ to be born again. As we baptized, and then confirmed each member at the water's edge, in the back of our mind was the fact that this was a very dangerous time for all of us. If we were reported to the government, the trip to Nepal could be very short indeed and many wonderful people could be harmed. Later, as we were safely back in Kathmandu at the hotel, we learned that a brother had a vision as we were baptizing. He would look at each person being baptized, and then when he would look up, he saw numerous angels surrounding the entire area where we were. What comfort and reassurance that God was watching our every move and was protecting His people.

Reality – Most countries of the world are much different than the United States. We here in this country have been blessed by God unlike anywhere else in the entire world. We are also very spoiled by this blessing. Once again this fact was reinforced as we lived in this new land for a few weeks. Bottled water must be used for drinking everywhere we went. It must be used even for brushing your teeth. Some areas of the country have very poor hotels, by our standards: no air conditioning, very thin mattresses with very hard beds, cold showers, eastern toilets, bugs and dirt in the room. Like I mentioned, we have become very spoiled. However, the hotel described did have one very nice benefit, it only cost us the equivalent of \$8.00 per day.

Blessing – Prayer Support – The FMOC members follow a fast and prayer schedule every day when a missionary is in the field. Family and Church members across the country and around the world fast and pray for us when we are gone. Even co-workers and the travel agent who arranged our tickets promised to pray for us when we were away. The Result – The power of God was

demonstrated time and time again during the trip. The Church of Jesus Christ was established. Miracles were evident. We were safe. Praise God!

Reality – The large cities in developing countries are typically very dirty and polluted. Diesel fumes, cows walking through the streets, too many people and cars in a confined space, plus less than adequate sanitation systems all contribute to a very unhealthy situation. Additionally, we are eating food our bodies are not entirely accustomed to eating. Many times, we are eating in restaurants that are not very clean or bug free. Once during lunch in a restaurant that was not the cleanest (plus the electricity was off), halfway through my dish of fried rice, I came across a dead bug. It was just pushed off the plate and I finished my lunch. Our bodies are tired and the stress of the unknown can be very tiring. All of these things can contribute to sickness. Many times the pollution and dirt of the city can give sore throats and sinus problems. Many times the food and water contribute to stomach problems or worse.

Blessing – The prayers of all the saints and friends were visibly evident and physically felt. We did not suffer even one small sickness the entire trip! No sore throat. No stomach or digestive problem. This was a miracle! This was an answer to all the prayers!

Reality – Bibles are hard to get and are destroyed by the government if they can find them. A truckload of Bibles, coming from India, was found, confiscated, and destroyed by the government. Not all Christians have Bibles.

Blessing – The Book of Mormon has been translated into the Nepali language. Through a special effort, we had 25 Books of Mormon printed before we left the US and we took these to Nepal with us. What a tremendous blessing it was to have the Book of Mormon in the native lan-

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*** WEDDINGS ***

Brother Dan Risola and Sister Sunshine Arafiles were united in holy matrimony, at the Forest Hills Branch, Holiday, Florida on March 15, 2003.

Sister Rhoda L. Jumper and Erik M. Miller were united in holy matrimony at the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch on February 7, 2003.

Sister Amanda Scaglione and Luis Valero were united in holy matrimony on July 5, 2003.

Children Blessed

Aaron James Cipponeri, son of Brother James and Sister Nicole Cipponeri, was blessed on June 22, 2003 in the Redford, Michigan Mission.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Brother Alfred (A.J.) Currier was baptized on May 25th, 2003 at the Redford Michigan Mission. He was baptized by Brother John Buffa and confirmed by Brother John Buffa.

Ordinations

Brother William H. Lowden was ordained a Deacon in the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch on June 22, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother John Bilsky, and he was ordained by Brother James Abbott.

Address Change

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

OBITUARIES

SADIE CAPAROTTA

Sister Sadie Caparotta of the Lake Worth, Florida Branch passed on to her reward on July 5, 2003. She was preceded in death by her husband. She is survived by a son, Ron, daughter-in-law Angelina; brother, Brother Sam Palermo; a granddaughter, nieces and nephews.

MOLLY B. KOSLOSKY

Sister Molly B. Koslosky of the Monongahela, Pennsylvania Branch, passed on to her reward on July 6, 2003. She is survived by two daughters, Sisters Dorothy Holan and Nancy Cartino; four sons, Carl, Kenneth, Robert and Richard Koslosky; 27 grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren and 9 great-great grandchildren.

ANTHONY GERACE

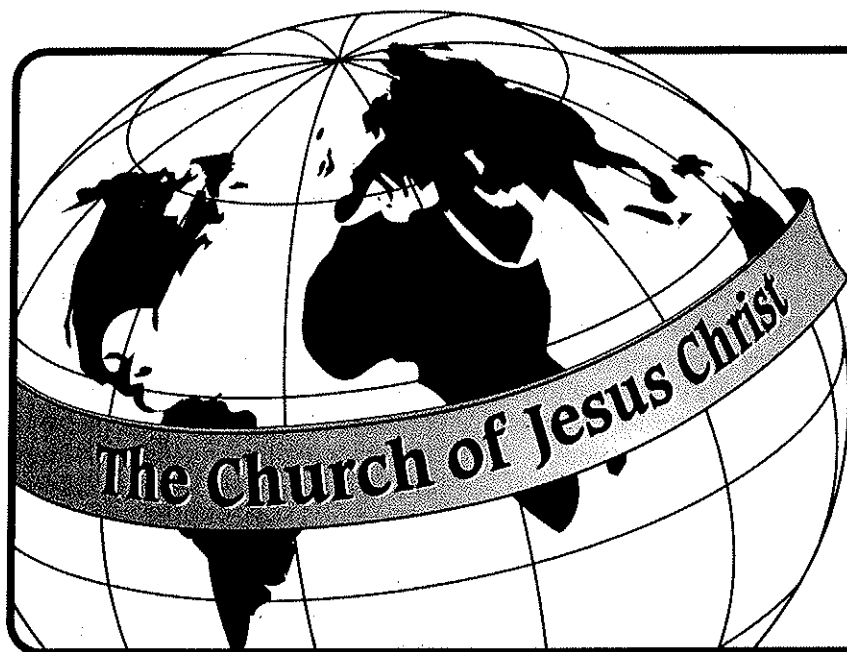
Brother Anthony Gerace passed on to his reward on June 28, 2003. He is survived by one daughter, Sister Rebekah DeRoo, and her husband Brother Chris, along with four grandchildren.

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guage to present to people. Almost everyone was anxious to receive one of the books and God provided evidences to its truth. One young couple came to us and we had a very delightful time sharing the Restored Gospel. They received a Book of Mormon as they departed and we told them to sincerely pray about the truth of what we had shared with them. The young woman had suffered with an issue of blood every day for a number of years. That evening before retiring to bed, this couple held the Book of Mormon and prayed for God to reveal the truth to them. In the morning, as they awoke, the young woman realized she had been healed from her problem and they were convinced of God's power.

Blessing — The gifts of God were abundant. Visions of angels were seen. The gift of tongues was spoken. Many healings were performed to the honor and glory of God. The complete Restored Gospel was preached. Souls were brought to Christ. The Church of Jesus Christ was established. A new nation, and kindred and tongue and people received the Everlasting Gospel. What a blessing! What a wonderful reality!



The Gospel News

World Headquarters Monongahela, PA, USA

October, 2003

Volume 59, No. 10

Maine Branches Out

By Sister Cynthia Marie Onorato

On May 24, 2003, the saints of the Brunswick, Maine Mission and the Atlantic Coast Region gathered together to partake in a special event, our Branch organization. Among those whom were visiting were Apostle Paul Benyola, Evangelists Joseph Perri and Matthew Rogolino, and Region President, Brother James Sgro. Approximately 100 saints, family and friends were in attendance.

On Saturday evening we gathered to organize as a Branch. Brother James Sgro addressed the meeting with much enthusiasm anticipating this day since our humble beginnings in 1969. The agenda for the evening was to be led by the Spirit of God.

Brother Donald Perrello, Maine Mission Historian, gave a slide presentation and a report of the Maine Mission history with some assistance from our youth. It revealed to us God's perfect plan as the pages of time unrolled from the time the seed of the Gospel was planted into Brother John and Sister Elizabeth Onorato's hearts until now. We saw how that seed was nourished and grew, blossoming into a fruitful tree.

Brother Darryl Onorato, Pre-

siding Elder of Maine, spoke of his thankfulness for all those who labored to make this day possible. God in His infinite wisdom, chose brothers and sisters to grow this Mission. He thanked his father, Brother Richard Onorato, Sr. for his support, courage and commitment to carry on as the Maine Mission grew.

Brother Richard Onorato Sr., Maine Mission elder, then gave all praise, honor and glory to God. He spoke with pureness of heart remembering his mother, Sister Elizabeth Onorato's sacrifices. She was a gentle and loving sister and her laugh brought such peace to him. He stated God blesses us in so many ways. God's gifts outnumber the stars in Heaven.

The fruits of his parents' desire came from answered prayers. They resided in Brooklyn, New York and were members of the Brooklyn Branch. They vacationed in Maine for many years. After returning home from Maine one summer they found their home and business had been robbed. The desire began to swell in their hearts to move to Maine, and they petitioned the Lord in prayer and fasting. The Lord gave them a dream that they were traveling on a highway to Maine. A State trooper motioned to them to come ahead and said, "The way is clear for you to go to Maine." They moved in 1969. Soon thereafter

God sent many laborers to support, encourage and do the work of God that set the example for us to follow.

The foundation was being laid. Brother John and Sister Elizabeth converted their garage into a small church building. An experience at that time was related of how a sister saw an angel shooting golden arrows into everyone's heart, even the children. As the Church began to grow we gathered in Brother Richard and Sister Mary Onorato's home for several years, and from that point the Lord provided us with the church building in Brunswick, Maine. This building was shown to Sister Elizabeth many years ago. She saw the building in a dream. On the front door there was a sign that said, Doctor. The building was so full it couldn't contain everyone.

Brother Richard Sr. spoke of his ordination in 1973, 30 years ago today. He related an experience had when he became an elder. He recalled as Brother Valenti was preaching it was given to Brother Richard three times by the voice of God to give all glory and honor to God. Give it to God by the grace of God!

In conclusion, Brother Richard conveyed to us that there were those who laid a foundation, tried by fire. We were able with God's help to stand firm through that fire. The region

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Maine Branches Out

Continued from Page 1

gave much support and guidance. We relied upon God. He never misguided us. He blessed us very much. God magnifies His people in every way! Everyone God has sent here has touched the Mission in a special way.

The Maine mission then stood in appreciation to the region.

Brother Matthew Rogolino spoke of Brother Frank Zahers sincere dedication to God and the Maine Mission. He spoke of the special friendship they shared as they labored for the Gospel together. He said, "We need to look behind the scenes. Right now we see a beautiful church building. There was much sweat, effort and tears that went into it. Now there is a light burning in Maine. Thank God!" He continued in saying, "What we put into church is what makes it beautiful because of our love. Build it the right way with love and compassion. That glorious hope is that we might know Him. To know Jesus is to know He loves you!"

Brother Paul Benyola then spoke of his enjoyment in viewing the history presentation. He stated, "A branch bears forth much fruit. Use it to the honor and glory of God!" He also sent Brother Dominic Thomas love and regards. His desire was to be with us.

All established officers of the Maine Mission were called to stand and their office was retained. All required offices for the function of operating as a Branch are filled and in order. Brother Paul Benyola offered up a prayer in the Maine Mission's behalf. As our Brother was praying, Sister Marie Perrello had a vision in which she saw Jesus with His arms outstretched to us.

At the close of our meeting, a special gift was presented to Sister Marie Perrello for her 25 years of dedicated service to God and the family of God as a Deaconess. She gave God all honor and thankfulness. Our meeting came to a joyful close as we sang, "Yes we trust the day is breaking, joyful times are near at hand, Let the Gospel be victorious through the world, in every land!"

As the building filled to capacity on Sunday morning we sang, *How Great Thou Art*, welcoming the Spirit of Christ to flow in our hearts. Brother Darryl Onorato spoke of his thankfulness for the spirit of song and praise. He stated, "It is a very special blessing to have the family of God with us."

Brother Paul Benyola, with open arms, performed a blessing upon Jordan Frederick Onorato, son of Daniel and Catharine Onorato. He stated children are complete angels in Gods sight. We then sang, *When Mothers in Salem*.

Brother Rick Calabro then invited us to come and dine on the spiritual food addressing the congregation. He spoke of the burning desire that was in his heart to come to Maine to show his support. He stated, "God is working and He is alive!" He was glad to see and experience great growth, good growth. A lot of memories flooded his mind and heart. He came to Maine many times to visit his grandparents, Brother John and Sister Elizabeth. He was a witness of the gifts of God. He saw the foundation being laid from his grandparent's fervent desire, prayer and fasting and sacrifice for the growth of the Church. All we have now came from much labor. God showers His blessings. He stated that Jesus founded this foundation upon His church. Referring to Matthew chapter 16, "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

He also used the example of Lehi and Sariah. They wanted something for their children and they diligently labored for it. "Life is not easy."

Brother Rick then related a dream he had before coming to Maine. In the dream he saw his grandmother, Sister Elizabeth. She was healthy and working, planting beautiful flowers. In

the dream she was wearing blue jeans (representing that she was working). This sent a message that, "It is time to build upon that foundation that our grandmothers and grandfathers have laid." What a heritage we have to build upon the foundation of Christ. We must embrace that spirit our grandparents had. They labored so that their children would have a better life. When Helamen spoke to his two sons, he told them to build their foundation on Jesus Christ, a sure foundation. "Take up that challenge. It is time to grow. Fast and pray for the gifts of God. The Spirit of God is what draws us. Pray for the gifts. We are in the presence of God Almighty. It is the Church He died for. His Church. Open your hearts and believe. He will bless us."

Brother Matthew Rogolino, continued in that same spirit saying, "This is our inheritance, our birthright. Sing unto the Lord and give thanks for upon this rock God will build his church!" He spoke of Freehold, New Jersey's humble beginnings and the hard work. Sometimes we don't understand God's plan. He saw that work blossom and God lifted us up. Everyone is special in God's eyes. He spoke that life is a beautiful thing when you're not in bondage of the world. "Be careful that the world does not rob us of our inheritance. We all have a responsibility. This is our place. We were blessed as a child. Go back and find your first love. Oh God our Church, a beacon light won't shine without us. There is a light burning in Maine."

Brother James Sgro followed speaking of the Restoration. "This is the Gospel restored by the greatness and goodness of God. In the days when Jesus walked the earth, the world could not understand who Christ was. When the disciples of The Church of Jesus Christ gathered unto him they proclaimed, 'Thou art the Christ, the son of the Living God.' The glory of this restoration was put into our hearts. The heritage that was entrusted to the house of Israel is now entrusted to us. The Spirit of God, the

(Continued on Page 4)

A Glorious Weekend in the Land of The Book of Mormon

By Brother Pete Oestreicher

Eleven weary travelers from The Church of Jesus Christ experienced a glorious and revitalizing (spiritual and physical) weekend at the Arequipa Mission in Peru. They were: Brother Isaac and Sister Bonnie Smith from Phoenix, Arizona; Brother Tom and Sister Tava Jones from Atlanta, Georgia; Brother Ish and Sister Janet Humphry and Sister Becky Rogolino from Hollywood, Florida; Sister Nancy Gehly from Fredonia, Pennsylvania; Brother Paul Liberto from San Diego, California; and Sister Janet and Brother Pete Oestreicher from Aliquippa, Pennsylvania.

They arrived at the Santa Maria Hotel in Arequipa on Saturday morning, May 3, 2003, and were greeted by Brother Dick and Sister Pat Christman, Brother Miguel Bicelis, Brother Paul A. Palmieri, and Sister Donna and Emily Eskut, who were all in Peru for their regular missionary visit. Seminars for the children were conducted that morning, with Brothers Paul A. and Miguel teaching the teenagers, and Sister Donna teaching the younger ones. The seminar's theme was *Positioning Ourselves to Receive the Blessings of God*.

After a delicious and nutritious lunch, everyone gathered at the Chili River for two baptisms. Brother Juan Mestas took two candidates into the rapid, rocky and very cold water, and out emerged Sister Erika Cardenas Salas and Sister Gheny Alarcon Galiano, who then had hands laid upon them for the reception of the Holy Ghost by Brothers Miguel and Dick respectively. Following this, like all tourists, the group proceeded to the Fundo El Fierro (artisan marketplace) to purchase souvenirs made by the brothers, sisters and friends of La Iglesia de Jesucristo. That evening, everyone enjoyed delicious food and warm hospitality at Trattoria Gianni, a restaurant owned by Gianni and Ana

Cordano, good friends of the Church.

Sunday morning, the Lord was definitely present at the meeting conducted in the meeting room on the top floor of the hotel. The singing of the saints, accompanied by Brother Miguel on the guitar, was beautiful and a glorious tribute to God. Brother Miguel also served as interpreter, which kept him pretty busy.

The children of the Arequipa Mission were presented an album that included greetings from the children of the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. The album also contained outlines of their hands with their names and scriptures. The children from Arequipa, in turn, made a similar poster for their friends in Aliquippa which read, "*Que se amen unos a otros como yo los he amado* [This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.]" (John 15:12).

The travelers brought numerous gifts to the brothers and sisters in

Peru, donated by themselves and their respective branches. These gifts included: children's clothing, hygiene items, first aid kits, socks and candy for the children.

Sister Janet Oestreicher set the communion table with a sacrament set brought to Peru from the United States and donated by the Penn-Mid Atlantic Ladies' Uplift Circle. Following this, Sister Janet noticed Sister Pat carrying a basin of water to the front of the room, and knew there was going to be an ordination. Sister Janet then noticed Sister Antonia Salas de Cardenas sitting on the other side of the room and thought to herself that someday she will be ordained a Deaconess. Sister Antonia then came forward to be ordained.

All the visiting Elders spoke to the congregation and let them know how honored they were to be in Peru, the land of The Book of Mormon, and speaking to the Seed of Joseph, God's chosen people.

Testimonies were then offered to the honor and glory of God. Brother Vicente Gongora testified that he had been praying about whether he should leave his job in Lima and move closer

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The children of the Arequipa Mission in Peru display the poster they made for their friends in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania.

A Glorious Weekend

Continued from Page 3

to the Church. After the meeting, Brother Vicente told Sister Janet Oestreicher (interpreted by Alberto Garcia, a good friend of the Church) that he had seen her in a dream two months prior to her arrival in Peru. Sister Janet was teaching children in this dream, and this experience confirmed to Brother Vicente that he must leave his job in Lima and move closer to the brothers and sisters of the Church.

During the meeting, Brother Ike stood up and began singing hymn #11, *An Angel Came Down*, in the spirit. He then reached back, grabbed the hands of the Elders next to him, pulled them to their feet, and continued singing in the spirit. All the Elders then arose, joined hands, and sang the hymn in English.

That afternoon, the group had dinner at an authentic Peruvian restaurant. Even though no one ordered alpaca steak or cuy (guinea pig, this time), Emily Eskut recommended anticuchos (chunks of beef heart) as an appetizer, which was delicious. Afterwards, the group went back to the hotel for a season of fellowship.

The next day, as the group was getting ready to continue their journey, they met Brother Daniel Mora, who had just arrived in Arequipa for missionary work. On the way to the airport, the group visited the Church building where meetings are usually conducted.

The entire group continued to the Lake Titicaca region of Peru, and a small contingent continued to the country of Bolivia. Here, several inquiries about the Church were made by the local people, addresses were exchanged, and it is quite possible that the door to another country may be opening.

We all had a glorious and enjoyable weekend with the brothers, sisters and friends of La Iglesia de Jesucristo in Arequipa, Peru.

Maine Branches Out

Continued from Page 2

power of His Word, the Bible, the Book of Mormon was handed to us by an angel establishing the Church and the Gospel in our hearts. The same authority rests on this ministry. We all have a talent, a gift to magnify God in our lives. We were encouraged to step up, not to fear and present the Gospel."

Brother Paul Benyola then welcomed Maine as a Branch on behalf of the General Church. He stated, "It is the people that make the Church, not the building. The building is used for prayer, singing hymns, preaching, and fellowship, partaking of communion. This is what builds and strengthens us." He spoke of his own experience in his life when he came to the crossroads and was faced with that decision to serve God. Ever since he made that decision to serve God, he embraced the Gospel and was surrounded by love. "It is a wonderful blessing being a part of the people of God. This is what it is all about."

Before testimony was opened Sister Cristina Churchill sang, *Give Thanks*, accompanied by Sister Sally Curtin playing the piano.

Testimony was given of the glorious blessings of God and how God has touched many lives. Brother Mickey McGuire of Dedham, Massachusetts was very thankful to be with us along with his wife, Sister Joann. This gave them great encouragement to continue on in their labors and opened their eyes to what Dedham could be.

A very overwhelming spirit of love encompassed our beings as we sang, *For Those Tears I Died*, as communion was being administered. Many tears flowed as we were brought to a remembrance of God's ultimate sacrifice of His Son for the salvation of our souls.

Sister Angela Reyes then related an experience she had while prayer was offered for communion. She was silently praying to God to allow her to see those beautiful things she saw when she was baptized. She then saw a light come up from the communion

table and it enlightened the Priesthood up front. The light then came across the brothers and sisters all the way to the back of the room. She looked to the back and there was an altar. On the altar were animals. The light came back and turned into a fire consuming everything on the altar. God showed to us that He accepted the great sacrifice of the saint's labors offered up unto Him.

Sister Nyema Reyes testified that she had prayer that morning for a stomach affliction. She stated, as she drank the wine it burned in her stomach and the pain was gone.

We then sang *Sweet Heavenly Spirit* and truly there was.

In ending, Brother Darryl Onorato admonished us to love one another and bring that love unto the world.

Thankfulness was expressed to the time and effort of the saints who came to support and fellowship with us and the love and sacrifices made on our behalf to make this day possible.

Brother James Sgro invited us to remember the region in fasting and prayer and to pray that God's blessings will continue. "All of us together can reach into the throne of God and ask for what God has promised us. Let's all make that commitment to serve God. We are The Church of Jesus Christ!"

Words

OUR WORDS CAN:

Bring blessings or hurt;
Bring happiness or make sad;
Testify of Christ or deny Him.

GOD'S WORDS CAN ONLY:

Bring blessings;
Bring joy;
Testify of Christ;
Teach us how to live.



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land" (Genesis 41:29-30).

"Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt that the land perish not through the famine" (Genesis 41:34-36).

The Pharaoh had a strange dream that he could not understand. Joseph was called upon to interpret the dream, as God had given Joseph this gifted ability of interpretation. Joseph did indeed interpret the dream, predicting that there would be a terrible famine for seven years in Egypt. However, the seven years preceding it would be bountiful. Believing the interpretation, the Pharaoh saved a fifth of the crops in each of the seven years of plenty, and averted starvation of his people during the seven following years of famine, because of the food that had been stored up. Many people from surrounding regions came to Egypt to buy corn because they were starving. Included were Joseph's own family, who came to him (not knowing it was Joseph) to buy food. Many people were saved because they were prepared.

In our lives, there are many times of "famine." It comes in the form of affliction, unemployment, marital strife, contention with family members or others, discouragement, depression, disillusionment, or hurt. We don't need a prophet to know that we WILL go through these things. Then there are times of success, happiness, joy, peace, and love. We also know that there WILL be times like these in our lives. The key to having a happy life is knowing how to save up during the time of plenty, so we can tap into it during times of famine. The concept of banking is a good metaphor. If you never put any money in the bank, or never had any type of savings plan, when something major would happen in your life requiring money, you would not have it. You would not have money to put your children through college, or have money for retirement. It is no different spiritually. We need to make a conscious effort during the good times to "save up." When times are good, we can pray with all the energy we have, that God would help us in times of need. Then when discouragement comes, and we are too weak to really pray as we should, we can simply ask God to honor those fervent prayers we offered up in the past. He'll never let us down. We can record the numerous blessing in a diary during the good times so we can read it during times of discouragement. We can do for others; helping them naturally or spiritually when it is well with us. Then when the time comes when we require help, we will find many friends who are willing to "return the favor." When times are good, we can work on eliminating bad habits and create new "good" habits, like reading the Word regularly, or praying regularly. Then when times are not so good, we won't have the added stress of a bad habit or ignorance of God's Word because we have never read. When times are good, we can plan special times for our spouses or families. This can create wonderful memories that can later cushion arguments or contention that WILL arise. There are so many ways to "save" in good times so we can "withdraw" in times of need. I'm sure you can think of many other examples.

Unfortunately, when times are good, most people forget to "save" in these ways. We simply overindulge on the good things. But if we discipline ourselves and consciously make an effort to save up during these times, we will have a far more balanced life. We will have a life that Jesus intended us to have, and will easily survive the "famine's" that we will face.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork

God Hates a Busybody

Dear Friends,

The Church of Jesus Christ is like being with a wonderful, big, family. There is love here and much power of God. It is a privilege to come to this church and have all these blessings.

In order to stay part of this big family, we must follow all the rules of God. He has very strict rules about the way He wants us to act and to treat one another. He wants this family to be more loving and far more kind than our flesh and blood families usually are.

In our families, many times people forget to respect another family member's business. Sometimes we may even talk about them in an unkind way. For example, a person might say, "Oh, they're nice," and then say "but . . ." and add a really mean, cruel sentence. The Lord hears that mean sentence and it makes him very mad at the gossip. We are told in I Peter 4:15, "But let none of you suffer [let yourself be] as a murderer, as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

God lists a busybody right along with those three other terrible crimes. We are not supposed to talk badly about one brother or sister to another. Not one bad thing. It causes hard feelings or distrust, and discord. This is not listed as a small sin.

In the Bible in Proverbs 6:16-19, it says, "These six things does the



Lord hate. Yes, seven are an abomination to him . . . a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies and he that soweth discord among the brethren [the Church brothers and sisters]."

If you talk badly about any

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brother or sister to someone else, it causes discord. This is an abomination to God. You must stop this. You are in deep trouble with God. There is no excuse in the family of God for us to talk about one another. Usually critical, busybody people are unhappy with themselves. They are people who try to put others down so they look better to themselves. Everyone knows this.

Don't do this. If you hear yourself acting this way, ask God to forgive you and to change you. Stop doing this. Figure out quietly why you are feeling cruel or jealous or mad. Make a goal to change yourself and quit being a busybody about everyone else. Don't hurt someone in the family of God, or friends visiting with us. Love them, forgive them if you see them in trouble or making mistakes, and be careful what you say. James says to control your tongue and pray for them. God commands us to do this. He expects us in the family of God to be better than our flesh and blood families.

With care,
Sister Jan

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Our Women Today

Aliquippa Circle Celebrates 80 Years

By Sister Karen L. Progar

It is hard to believe that 80 years ago a small group of sisters in the Aliquippa Branch started meeting as a Ladies' Uplift Circle in May of 1923. Since that time, the Circle has been a great help to the Aliquippa Branch and

the General Circle, meeting all the requests made of them and providing support naturally and spiritually.

Saturday afternoon, May 31st began our weekend celebration as nearly 50 sisters, brothers and friends enjoyed a three hour river cruise, followed by dinner and time for fellowship. The day was gray and rainy, but the fellowship and fun was sunny and incredible.

The weekend concluded on Sunday when the branch granted the sisters the privilege of providing a special program. Sisters Janet Gibson and Joyceann Jumper wrote a wonderful program in which the history of the Circle and the role of sisters past and present was highlighted. We had time

to sweetly reminisce on the past as the names of our sisters who had gone on to their reward were read as roses were placed in vases in their memory. The three vases prepared were later taken to our shut-in sisters as a token of our love for them.

Following the service, a delicious luncheon was enjoyed by all. We consider it a true gift of God to have enjoyed such a wonderful auxiliary for these many years. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless the Aliquippa Ladies' Uplift Circle as it continues on in its service to the branch and The Church of Jesus Christ, while providing an avenue for the Church's women to develop spiritually.



Branch and Mission News

Forest Hills, Florida Ordinations

By Sister Lorraine Rose

I CAN HEAR MY SAVIOR CALLING...

Our Branch has been blessed with the love that God continues to bestow upon us. He has seen fit to call three of our brothers to the office of Deacon. May 18, 2003, our cups were truly filled as many visitors, friends, family and the brothers and sisters of our Branch witnessed Brother Nick Davella, Brother Erik Rooney and Brother Keith Eutsey being ordained as Deacons.

Brother Scott Griffith opened our meeting in prayer, which was followed by Brother Milford Eutsey, Jr. reading the duties of a Deacon from the *Law and Order of The Church of Jesus Christ*. He then read from Acts 6, the Apostle speaking, "...It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost

and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." As our Brothers prepared for the ordination, Brother Scott elaborated on the scripture that was read. There was a need to help the Apostles and those that were chosen carried the Spirit of God through their lives just as our brothers carry that same Spirit. We must set an example and shine our light that the world may see something different in us, which is the Light of Jesus Christ.

Brother Bobby Woods washed Brother Nick Davella's feet and he was ordained by Brother Philip Benyola, Sr. Brother Dewayne Eutsey washed Brother Keith Eutsey's feet and he was ordained by Brother Milford Eutsey, Sr. Brother Dan Risola washed Brother Erik Rooney's feet and he was ordained by Brother Jim Speck.

Brother Scott, Brother Bryan, Brother Dan, Sister Sunshine and Sister Mandy sang *A Few Good Men*. We then heard each of our newly-ordained Deacons give testimony of how the Lord has worked in their lives to bring them to this calling of service for Him. We feel so blessed in the calling of our brothers. They have that beautiful spirit with them that shines in all they have done and will continue to do with the guidance of our Lord.

We are thankful this day for the Bountiful Blessings we enjoyed.

Healing in New Orleans

By Brother Mark Kovacic

Our four year old son, Michael, contracted a tenacious virus when he was two weeks old and since then has been plagued with respiratory problems. We have been to the emergency room twice and the doctor's office four other times this spring. We were in fear that Michael would be diagnosed with asthma at any moment. Sister Marlea Frentzos relayed our problem to the Ministry in Atlanta and an anointed handkerchief was sent to us. Brother George and Sister Marlea brought it to us on Sunday June 1, 2003.

After our study session was over, I took Michael and our daughter, Jennifer, into Michael's room and I explained to them about the handkerchief. We had prayer together for Michael's healing and then I pinned the handkerchief on the inside of Michael's shirt against his chest. He asked, "How long do I have to wear it, Mommy?" I told him just as long as you want to. The kids went off to play for a while and then Michael came to me and said "Mommy, you can take it off of me, I'm healed now!"

(Continued on Page 8)

Healings in New Orleans

Continued from Page 7

The look on his face was complete belief and acceptance.

We went out to visit my sister in Oklahoma the next week and when we returned there was a message on our machine from our doctor saying he wanted to do another chest x-ray on Michael for comparison to see if there was scaring in his lungs or if it was just pneumonia. We went and had the x-ray. It was perfectly clear. No pneumonia, no asthma! Praise God!!!

Sister Hilary Gipson
Pearl River, Louisiana.

Blessings at Miami-Dade Mission

The Ordinances of the Church are beautiful! The blessing of a child is special! We had several visitors from Peru at our meeting and the Spirit of God was prevalent. You could feel it in the singing, preaching, testimony – what more can we ask? Sister Melissa and Brother Miguel sang #59, *To See the Morning Light* (a few verses in Spanish).

Evangelist Miguel Bicelis opened with appropriate scriptures and we felt a great blessing in hearing our visitors giving testimony of thanks to God for inviting them to our meeting! Our Lord asked, "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" Whoso shall receive a little child received me. God can read every intent of our heart. 3 Nephi 11:31-32, "...I will declare unto you my doctrine...repent and believe in me." Vs. 37, "And again I say unto you, ye must repent, and become as a little child, and be baptized in my name, or ye can in nowise receive these things." Vs. 38, "And again I say unto you, ye must repent and be baptized in my name, and become as a little child, or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God."

What is the message? Why did Christ come? Not for us to have a holiday on Christmas. God sent His

Son to give us a gift we can use in this life to go to eternity, and that becomes a greater gift. The message was that He wanted to give us a gift of forgiveness. God understands that we are not perfect; He understands that we have pain and needs and whoso does not come and be baptized shall not receive the gift. First is the forgiveness of sins to return to the state of little children. If Christ came, the little children would run to him. We might be praying on our knees, crying, but little children would be embracing Christ.

Moroni 8:10 – Little children do not have to be baptized. Repentance and baptism is for those who are "accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children." Vs. 11 – "And their little children need no repentance, neither baptism. Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins." Vs. 12 – "...little children are alive in Christ..." When they pass, they go directly to God. If you choose to receive it, God has a gift. We want you to find your place, whatever God has for you. All is FREE; Christ never charged anything for being a blessing. May you be guided by the Spirit to find yourself in His congregation.

At this time the parents brought the child forward and Brother Miguel blessed little Ysabella. The parents and family were pleased with their smiles and testimony of thanks to God. Brother George Kovacic spoke about the disciples trying to control the crowd, from Luke. The children saw Jesus and they were attracted to him and it upset the disciples. Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for such is the kingdom of heaven."

Brother Justin Severson said he felt it a relief when his two children were blessed. God knows what is at stake and He will direct the children and one day they will serve Him. It was a privilege to meet all of the visitors this day. Of course, we invite them back.

Russellville, Alabama

On July 12 and 13, 2003 Brother Mark and Sister Kelly Kovacic, along with her father, Gerald Warden, went to Russellville to fellowship with saints and their families. Saturday evening was spent fellowshiping and catching up on all of the news and activities and admiring how the children had grown in such a short amount of time. For Sunday services, Brother Mark taught the ten adults from Brother Dominic Moraca's pamphlet, *Drawing Closer to God*. Testimonies were offered and communion was served. Sister Kelly took the children for their own Sunday School lesson.

Brother Ricardo, Sister Anna, Brother Rickie and Joanna Nava have relocated to Las Vegas, Nevada; however, they stay in contact. Sister Anna called the other day to say that while reading Brother Bucci's book *American Indian Moses* at a bus stop, another woman waiting for the bus began to ask her questions about the book. The woman said it looked very interesting and wanted to know how to obtain a copy. Sister Anna got her name and address, and a copy is on its way.

Brother Alfredo and Sister Azar, along with their three children, spent two weeks in Tijuana. They specifically went to attend the *Conference of the Americas*, as well as to see their families. Both were able to testify of the wonderful blessings they enjoyed while visiting there. Sister Azar's father, Brother David, who spent some time in Russellville, sent his greetings to all of the saints in our Region.

Brother Moises Gonzalez is currently working in southern Tennessee. Being away from Sister Teresa and their three children is difficult for all of them. Please remember them in your prayers.

Brother Osvaldo and Sister Lupe Gonzalez are expecting their third child in early November. Please remember them in your prayers as well that all may proceed well.

Sister Febe Castrejon Lopez is in need of our prayers, as her mother recently passed away in Mexico. She testified Sunday that with Christ she is

comforted, but asks us to pray for her family in Mexico, as they do not have the same reliance on Christ as she does and are greatly troubled by the loss of their mother. What a beautiful reminder that only Christ can provide the Comforter!

The saints in Russellville all send their greetings to the brothers and sisters of the Region and invite all to visit them.

Treasure Coast, Florida

By Sister Lori Checchi

May and June have been months filled with both trials and blessings for the Treasure Coast Branch. Through it all, we have learned the blessings are worth the battle.

Our May 4 meeting began with Brother David Checchi opening our meeting. He asked the question to the congregation – Do we remember the promise we made at the water's edge? In the midst of all our trials and troubles, do we remember to praise God? Do we let things stand in the way of our serving God? Using the 10th chapter of Mark, where the young ruler asks Christ what he must do, Brother David elaborated on what we must do to be saved. What one thing do we lack that stands in our way of serving God? Brother David testified that before he was baptized, he wanted everything in order in his life. He had trouble letting go of this idea and it hindered him from getting baptized. When he finally took that step, a vision was had of two lambs standing beside him and a voice spoke saying "Take up thy cross and follow me." We need to let go of the things in our life that hinder us. For those that have not made that commitment, the Lord is calling. For those that have made the commitment, keep pressing forward. Get up each morning, pick up your cross and keep going. Get back to that first love."

Brother Ron Carradi followed speaking from the same scripture and commented that the young ruler was

expecting Christ to be impressed with his words. Brother Ron said eternal life is for everyone. You don't have to do anything, but whether you spend this eternal life in heaven is up to you. He also spoke of the two men who were asked to serve in the vineyard. One said no, and then did serve. One said yes, and then did not. Which one did the will of the father? What mattered was the commitment and the one who followed through with his effort and actions were greater than his words. The work must be done with an eye to the purpose of glorifying God.

On May 18, Brother Rocco Benyola opened and commented that every day life is a battle. We need to keep ourselves in that fighting spirit to be able to endure to the end. He read from the book of Ephesians and spoke of what we must wear spiritually to prepare for this daily battle. "Our loins must be girt with the truth for the truth will set you free. The adversary is full of lies and deceit and we must protect ourselves from these things. Put on the breastplate of righteousness, study constantly, and live in obedience to the Gospel. Our feet must be shod with the Gospel of peace." Brother Rocco compared the adversary's work to a work of turmoil, not of peace. "We let him stir up our lives and make us stressed and unhappy. We have the Holy Spirit and the fruits of the Spirit; love, joy, meekness, etc. If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit, above all, taking the shield of faith. Our faith has shown us many times that the blessings are worth it. We have to battle despair and discouragement. We need a positive attitude, a 'get up and go for God' attitude. We can do all things through Christ Jesus. He can help us prevail. Our knowledge makes us realize this. We know based on experiences of family, brothers and sisters and we know Christ cannot fail. This knowledge makes us realize the blessings are worth the battles. Be prayerful and don't get sidetracked by the stress the evil one can cause in our life. Keep your eye on the mark."

Brother John D'Orazio followed quoting the Apostle Paul where he

writes we are troubled on every side, but not distressed. "No matter what the situation of life is that we face, if we do not allow Satan to overcome us, he won't. Greater is he that is in you. Our problems might not be easy, but we can overcome them. Those that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

On June 1, the blessing continued with many visitors in our branch this day. They included Carla and Peter Bolcato, Sis. Joann Romano, Brother Dean and Sis. Denise Romano, Hank and Sis. Dianne Stelzer and their children. Brother Rocco welcomed all and thanked everyone for their attendance. He noted it had been a rough week and he announced that Brother Mark Rogolino and Sis. Mary Cason were in the hospital. He asked that we follow the spirit and let it prevail because we're in God's house and our problems are outside.

Brother Frank Rogolino opened and said that although we have sorrows and troubles now, it will be beautiful when we can one day see Jesus. Stay faithful to the Lord and keep the love of Jesus Christ in your heart. Brother Rocco followed and told the congregation they must keep God first in every part of their lives. "Make him the cornerstone of marriage, your guide while you are young in school and when you are older. Do not trust in the flesh; trust in the arm of God. Even if you fall down, you need to pick yourself up and keep on going. Ignore your pride and do whatever it takes to endure to the end and God will take care of you."

On June 4, the local MBA enjoyed a campout style meeting with song and testimony. Brother David Checchi spoke saying how wonderful it is to be able to go to God in prayer for all our needs. "Don't ever take that privilege for granted. When we are at our lowest, we can go to God in prayer and He will not leave us alone." A wonderful spirit was felt as each member of the congregation from the youngest to the eldest testified of God's goodness and glory. The testimony meeting began with a group of teens and children singing and praising

(Continued on Page 10)

Treasure Coast, FL

Continued from Page 9

God. They thanked God for being in their lives and for their parents bringing them to church. We continued by having members from each of the surrounding cities sing in groups and testify. Sister Mary Cason spoke of a recent experience where her heart stopped for a couple minutes and she thanked God for allowing her to live. Brother Frank Rogolino closed by saying that we all need each other and we need to help each other.

On June 15, after our Sunday School lesson, we started this Father's Day by singing many wonderful praises unto our Heavenly Father. As Jared Benyola led the singing this morning, we invited the Spirit of God in through songs of praise. Our meeting was opened by Brother John D'orazio who read from Genesis 22 concerning the faith Abraham had in offering his only son, Isaac. One can only surmise the grief he must have felt in preparing him for the sacrifice, but he was determined to obey God's command, believing that God would raise him up and keep his promise regarding Abraham's seed. Brother John also related the importance of being a natural father in our day and time, and how this responsibility should not be taken lightly. Fathers should set the example for their children to follow, even as Christ set the example for us to follow.

Brother David Checchi followed, reading from the same chapter and relating how Isaac asked his father where the sacrifice was, and Abraham's answer was that God would provide the sacrifice. Even as Abraham was prepared to offer his only son as a sacrifice, God did not withhold his only begotten son from going to the cross for each and every one of us. We have the promise of salvation through faith, repentance and baptism because God sent his only Son to die for our sins.

As the meeting was opened for testimony, Sister Linda D'orazio was quick to get up and praise God for healing her of a blocked artery. The doctors told her several tests showed

that she had a 60-70% blockage in her neck, but when they did a final test, they found out that her artery was "pristine" with no blockage at all. Praise God!

As the meeting continued, Brother Scott Martin, who recently began attending meetings once again, stood and asked to be reinstated back into fellowship. He stated that his desire was to take communion with the saints of God. As the Ministry called him up front, Brother Frank Rogolino offered a prayer that God would accept him back into the fold.

We then went into our feet washing service and enjoyed a nice spirit of peace and unity with one another in observing this ordinance. Afterward, a potluck dinner was held and we all went home with our cups filled, once again praising God!

Tampa, Florida

By Brother Peter Benyola

"Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:2-3).

On Sunday, August 31, 2003 saints from across the region assembled to witness the ordinations of Brother Kevin Murphy and me (Brother Peter Benyola) into the office of Deacon at Tampa, Florida.

Two weeks earlier, at the Southeast Region Conference in Lake Worth, Brothers Phil Benyola, Sr. and Milford Eutsey approached us and informed us that it was time for us to be called to work as Deacons. Later that evening, Brother Kevin and Sister Stacy returned to their room. Kevin was unable to sleep, and lying awake, he prayed for hours to the Lord for a sign that this calling was from Him and

not just for the needs of man. In the middle of the night, an awful foreboding fell over him and he felt fear like he'd never felt before, just as a child afraid of a monster under his bed. Then he knew it was the devil that wanted him. "I haven't been so scared in all my life. The words came to me, 'Get thee behind me, Satan, in the name of Jesus Christ, leave me alone.' At that moment all fear left me and I knew that the Lord wanted me as much as Satan did. We know who wins that battle," he testified the following Sunday back in Tampa, tears swelling in his eyes.

Brother Kevin was introduced to the Church last summer by his wife, Sister Stacy Walton. Since then, his son has been healed of seizures and he has been healed of shingles under the hands of the ministry and by the grace of the Lord. Brother Kevin was baptized in December and has grown to be a great asset to our congregation.

I have desired the responsibilities of a Deacon for some time; likewise, the discretion of the ministry and the need for a Deacon was there, but I was seeking a personal confirmation that I could really call my own, so I spent this time praying for a sign from the Almighty for His calling. I also solicited other brothers and sisters to pray for this purpose, that theirs might be heard. Lo and behold, I received blessings on Sunday. Before the meeting started the song, *Mountain of the Lord*, was selected. I was so touched by the words, I cried. It is unusual for me to be touched so strongly in a service, so when it happens to me, something special or out of the ordinary is taking place.

Sister Christina Paxson sang #24 in the *Songs of Zion, The Day He Found Me*. Brother Malcolm Paxson from the Atlanta branch spoke on the story of Nicodemus, and Brother Milford Eutsey went through the duties and conventions of the Deacon in I Timothy and the Law and Order. Brother Kevin was called forth, and all the Deacons sat before him. Before his feet were washed, each Deacon was asked to give him a brief piece of

advice. Brother Eric Rooney was inspired to wash Brother Kevin's feet, and he was ordained by Brother Jim Spec, Sr.

"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Verse 4). Then the hymn, *Ye Who Are Called to Labor* was sung and I was asked to come forward. The Deacons again each presented me with a short piece of advice. This had not been done before in our branch and it was very moving. The Spirit filled them as they poured their hearts out about their love for their office and experiences and what they had learned from their calling.

My brother, Deacon Philip Jr., washed my feet. I thank God for inspiring that prayer because by that time the Spirit in the room was in full swing as we were all touched by his words.

"...When they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" (Verse 5-6).

As the Elders surrounded me to bestow the authority of a Deacon, Brother Phil, Sr. offered the bottle of oil to whomever felt inspired. The Spirit prompted Brother Dominick Rose to perform the ordination, but he held back. Then Brother Phil turned to him and said, "Brother Dominick, I feel that you should ordain Peter." Later, Brother Dominick would tearfully confess to Brother Phil that he also felt the prompting, but waited for a confirmation, which occurred when Brother Phil invited him to perform the ordination. This time the Lord gave both Brother Dominick and me the answers we sought but with one blessed confirmation. Brother Dominick took the bottle immediately and ordained me. This experience was indeed the sign I had been praying for.

We were later asked to share our testimonies. Brother Kevin expressed how the Lord convinced him of the Gospel when he beheld the miracles in his life. I related the serious thought I had given to the forthcoming ordination while I spoke to God, asking Him to reveal to me the stumbling blocks that

might come between my service and Him. It occurred to me the things I would have to work on— things like initiative, discernment, determination, and most importantly humility. I testified that I would not overcome the obstacle of gaining these things without the Lord giving me strength, and that my brother and I would need to have them in order to do justice for the service of the office. I asked them to pray for us that we would serve them and the Lord to the greatest extent and in whatever way He sees fit. Our meeting was closed with #36 from the *Songs of Zion, Remove Every Stumbling Block*, a song that, quite honestly, I had been reflecting on quite a bit lately. God shows us love in the small things.

Now I would ask you to remember us in prayer, and others in the Church with responsibilities, because we all gain strength when we pray on behalf of each other. We asked God to call us to service, and we were blessed this Sunday. The One who loves us is always there to fulfill our needs if we would only ask Him and let Him do His great work.

* WEDDINGS *

Brother Jonathan Rogalla and Amy Campana were united in holy matrimony, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on June 21, 2003.

Children Blessed

Jordan Frederick Onorato, son of Daniel T. and Catherine L. Onorato, was blessed on May 25, 2003 in the Brunswick, Maine Branch.

Jayson Emmanuel Perrello, son of Donald and Ann Perrello was blessed on June 24, 2003 in the Brunswick, Maine Branch.

Olivia Rose Landrey, daughter of Brother Austin and Sister Nicole Landrey was blessed on July 6, 2003 in the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch.

Brooke Elizabeth Lambert, daughter of Brother Jim and Sister Lynette Lambert was blessed on August 3, 2003 in Detroit, Michigan Branch #2.

Ysabella Bernaola Lewis, daughter of Michael P. Donnelly and Darlene B. Camacho was blessed on August 3, 2003 in the Miami-Dade, Florida Branch.

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to those that mourn the loss of loved ones. May God bless and comfort you.

ROBERT A. WATSON

Brother Robert A. Watson of the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch passed on to his reward on May 15, 2003. Brother Bob was an ordained Apostle of The Church of Jesus Christ. He is survived by his wife, Sister Sarah Watson; children, Sister Elaine and spouse, Brother Dwayne Jordan, Brother Larry and spouse, Sister Vanessa Watson, and Judy and spouse, Rick Roberts; six grandchildren and their spouses; and six great-grandchildren.

ANTHONY R. PALERMO

Brother Tony Palermo of the Phoenix/Mesa, Arizona Branch, passed on to his reward on July 6, 2003. He is preceded in death by his wife, Sister Rose Palermo. He is survived by his children, Sister Carrie and spouse, Brother Walt Jankowski, Darryl Palermo, and Marietta Sefcik; five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sister Jeanette Israel was baptized on July 6, 2003 in the Brunswick, Maine Branch. She was baptized by Brother Richard J. Onorato, Jr., and confirmed by Brother Richard Onorato, Sr.

Sister Nicole Amy Nnadi was baptized at the Columbus, Ohio Mission. She was baptized by Brother Isaac J. Smith and confirmed by Brother Paul A. Palmieri.

Sister Tracy L. Humphreys was baptized on July 20, 2003 at the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Paul Ciotti Jr., and confirmed by Brother William Colangelo.

Sister Lisa Harris was baptized on July 20, 2003 at the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Richard Lawson and confirmed by Brother Paul Ciotti, Sr.

Brother Jeffrey Harris was baptized on August 10, 2003 at the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Paul Ciotti, Sr. and confirmed by Brother Ralph Ciotti.

Sister Carla Joann Bolcato was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. She was baptized by Brother Chuck Maddox and confirmed by Brother Paul A. Palmieri.

Brother Peter Vincent Bolcato, Jr. was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. He was baptized by Brother Lou Vitto and confirmed by Brother Larry Champine.

Sister FuChieh Hung (Laina) was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. She is attending the Harrison, Michigan Mission. She was baptized by Brother Lyle Criscuolo and confirmed by Brother Bob Pizzaia.

Brother Andrew Thomas McNamara was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. He is attending the Metuchen, New Jersey Branch. He was baptized by Brother David Catalano and confirmed by Brother Ken Lombardo.

Sister Chelsea Alexandra Ignagni was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. She is attending the Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas Branch. She was baptized by Brother Joe Ignagni and confirmed by Brother Jeff Giannetti.

Brother Aaron Thomas Palmieri was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. He is attending the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Paul A. Palmieri and confirmed by Apostle Paul Palmieri.

Sister Tessa Elizabeth Churchill was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. She is attending the Maine Branch. She was baptized by Brother Joe Ignagni and confirmed by Brother Tony Calabrese.

Brother Justin Alexander Machnik was baptized on July 16, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. He was baptized by Brother Joe Ignagni and confirmed by Brother Leonard A. Lovalvo.

Sister Elise Anna Kehr was baptized on July 17, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. She is attending the Metuchen, New Jersey Branch. She was baptized by Brother David Catalano and confirmed by Brother Jim Link.

Brother Aaron Jon Olexa was baptized on July 17, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. He is attending the Metuchen, New Jersey Branch. He was baptized by Brother Doug Obradovich and confirmed by Brother Ken Lombardo.

Brother Colby John Lombardo was baptized on July 17, 2003 at the GMBA Campout in Saginaw, Michigan. He is attending the Metuchen, New Jersey Branch. He was baptized by Brother Ken Lombardo and confirmed by Brother Tony Vadasz.

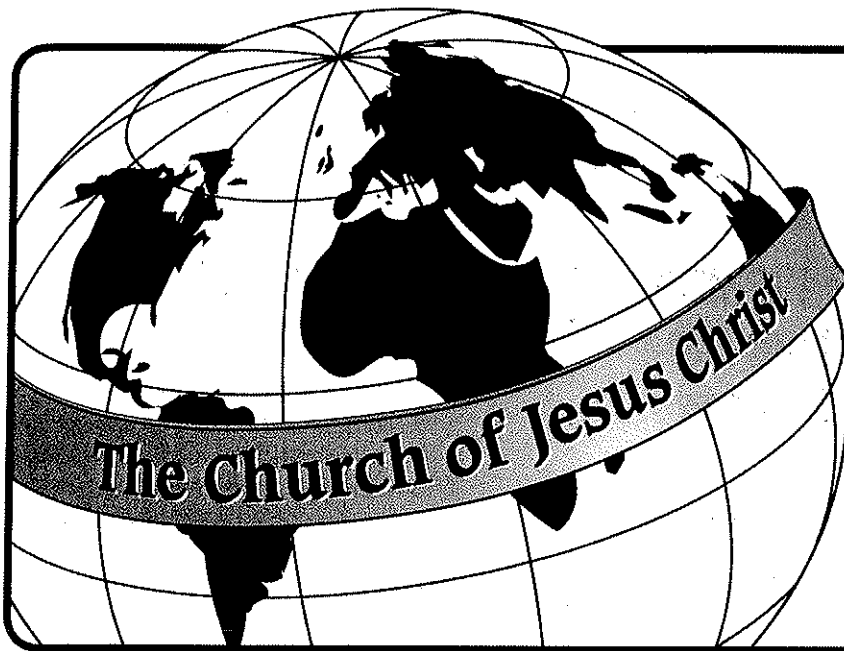
Sister Kelly Rutledge was baptized on July 20, 2003 in the Inner City, Detroit, Michigan Branch. She was baptized by Brother Daniel Mora and confirmed by Brother Steve Champine.

Address Change

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____



The Gospel News

World Headquarters: Monongahela, PA, USA

November, 2003

Volume 59, No. 11

The Church of Jesus Christ Established in Malawi, Africa

By Evangelist J. Joseph Perri.

The year was 1986; Brother Joseph Calabrese and I were preparing for a missionary trip to Kenya. Brother Elizaphan Osaka and his wife, Sister Nina were baptized, and our purpose for taking this trip was to establish the Church in that country. Before our departure, I received a telephone call from a brother who said he had a dream and wanted to relate it to me.

He said in the dream he was shown the continent of Africa with all of the countries and their boundaries. He saw the country of Nigeria, and there was a bright flame of fire burning. The next country he saw was Ghana; from that country there was a bright flame of fire burning also. He was made to understand that The Church of Jesus Christ had already been established in both of these countries, thus the bright flame of fire. The next country he saw was Kenya, and there was a small flame just beginning to burn.

As he looked and beheld the continent of Africa, within each country he could see sparks as though a fire was being started in every country until the entire African

continent was ablaze. The Church in Kenya has been established for some years now and the next country to receive the Gospel and The Church of Jesus Christ Established was Malawi. The interpretation of this dream was it showed the time would eventually come when every country in Africa would be receiving the message of the Restored Gospel. Many inquiries are coming from different countries in Africa requesting information. What is the next country interested and inquiring about the Restored Gospel? The Republic of the Congo! A possible exploratory trip is planned early in 2004.

Malawi is known as the Warm Heart of Africa, a peaceful country, with its citizens very humble. When Brothers John DiBattista and Joel Gehly made their exploratory trip to Malawi in March this year, they found two aged brothers receptive to the message of the Restored Gospel, that were baptized: pioneers God prepared for the great work of the Lord in Malawi.

The dates of our visit were from August 24th through September 7th. This was our first visit there. Brother

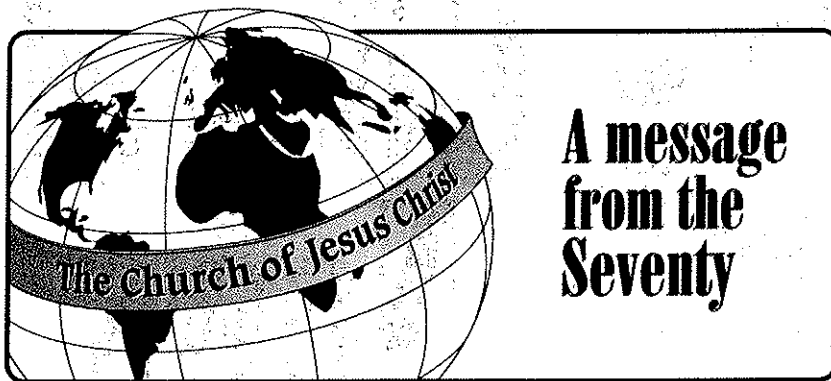
Lyle Criscuolo and I have been on previous trips to Africa, however this was the first visit to an African country for Evangelist Philip Arcuri of the Atlantic Coast Region and Elder Alphonso Hopkins of the Southeast Region. Having been on missionary work to other countries in Africa where the weather is very hot and humid, it was a welcomed relief to have warm days and very cool nights. We had to sleep under a blanket.

Our first visit with and introduction to Brothers Nyirenda and Gausi, were under the same Mango tree in Brother Nyirenda's compound where Brothers John and Joel met these two brothers and their conversion took place. Greeting Brother's Frederick and Manase (Calvin) gave each of us the same impression of humility that Brother John and Joel experienced.

We paused and offered prayer, thanking God for our safe arrival in this country, for the opportunity to meet our Brothers Nyirenda and Gausi and be able to accomplish our mission for which we were sent, that our trip would be fruitful, and our Creator and His Son Jesus would be glorified, honored and praised.

Brother Frederick was determined that The Church of Jesus Christ would be established in Mzimba. Our first mission was to meet the Police

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Vacation Bible School in Bogotá, Colombia

By Sister Bonnie Metzler

The first Vacation Bible School sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ, Bogotá, Colombia, South America, was held, July 7th through July 11th. Praise God, what a joyful week! For most of the children in Colombia, the school year starts in January and ends in October. The children have a mid-year break late in June through the middle of July. Brother Salvatore Conte, Brother Alan and Sis Bonnie Metzler, traveled to Bogotá, Colombia July 4th through July 14th with the desire to assist with holding a Vacation Bible School for

the children of the saints in Colombia.

We want to give all honor and glory to God. He provided for all of our needs in preparing for the week. The lessons this year in Colombia were used last October with the children in Guatemala. Thank God for providing brothers and sisters to translate the lessons for our children in foreign countries. God inspired the additional activities that were presented to the children throughout the week.

Each morning a little before 10:00 a.m., smiling, laughing children

would knock at the Torres' family front door and climb the stairs to the third floor to the "Church on the Rooftop." Brothers Juan Carlos and Alan held chapel each morning, welcoming the children and presenting the day's topic. Sister Joanna Pedraza taught the nine to thirteen-year-olds, Sister Sandra Torres taught the six to eight-year-olds, and Sister Bonnie taught the two to five-year-olds. Brother Salvatore recorded most of the week's activities on tape. Each day at the conclusion of the activities, Sister Marisol Torres prepared a lunch for the children.

Monday morning sixteen children attended. Our lesson for the first day was "Noah and the Ark." What a blessing to hear the children discuss Noah's obedience to God. It seemed that the children went home the first day and told friends. Twenty-four children came the second day and "Joseph and His Coat of Many Colors" was the lesson. What a joy to speak about Joseph and the love he had for God and his family. Day three, the number was increased by two, and the topic was "David and Goliath" and the faith young David possessed in God. On the final day of classes, twenty-eight participated. The lesson, "Daniel and the Lion's Den," taught about God's love and protection for those who love and serve Him.

God truly blessed us abundantly in teaching the children His word. Prior to the week, it was anticipated fifteen to twenty children would be attending. Preparations had been made for as many as thirty children, and on day five twenty-nine children participated. We took the children to a petting zoo in Bogotá, what fun! Most of the children had never been to the petting zoo park. What an adventure!

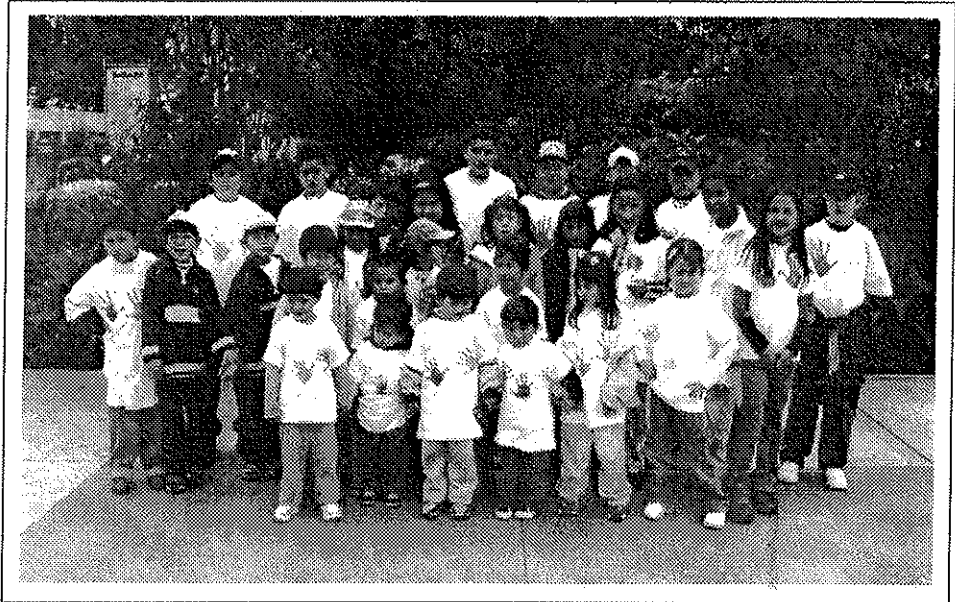
Friday night, family members were invited to the rooftop church for fellowship. The children sang for the families and displayed the activities and crafts they had completed throughout the week. We all ate pizza and enjoyed each other's company. There were forty people in attendance. The parents expressed their



Children at Vacation Bible School in Colombia, July 2003.

appreciation for all that was done with their children during the week. Reflecting back on the smiling faces of both children and the adults, I thank God for the blessings and joy He gave each of us.

Another blessing on Saturday was experienced when we returned to the home to hear music and singing coming from upstairs. The children were continuing their organ and guitar lessons. It was a pleasant surprise to find 14 people, young and old, gathered in a circle practicing the church songs. The instructor, who is not a member, was teaching the correct way to sing the *Songs of Zion* and other Spanish hymns. Upon seeing and hearing the fruits of their effort, we want to thank all of you who have donated to this project.



Children at Vacation Bible School in Colombia, July 2003.

Malawi, Africa

Continued from Page 1

and Planning Commissioners. He wanted these men to know why we came to Mzimba, and that, when we were seen in the area, they would know what our purpose was for being in the country. Our visit was short; the officials we met gave their approval and thanked Brother Frederick for his intent.

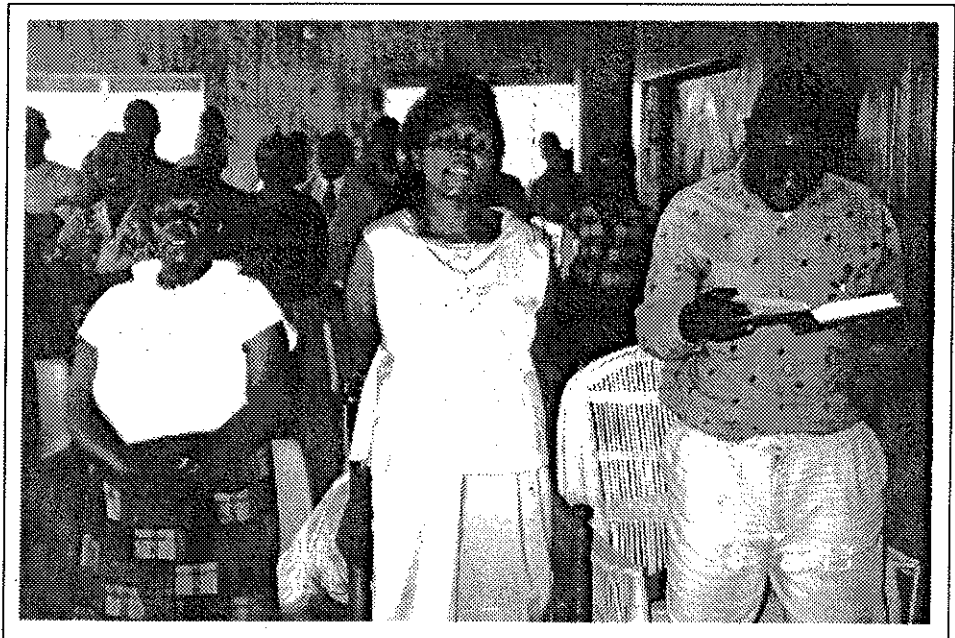
Returning to the compound of Brother Nyirenda, we began to instruct our brothers by actually administering communion, feet washing, and blessing of oil for anointing. It was apparent during this time, that the men and women who began to assemble there seemed interested in observing what was taking place. An invitation was given to those who had been meeting with Brothers Frederick and Manase, that if they desired prayer, asking God for help in making a decision in giving their lives to Jesus Christ, it would be done. One young man by the name of Christopher Banda, wasted no time in requesting prayer, and while prayer was being offered for him under the hands of the Ministry, he began to cry and it was evident he was having a struggle

within himself. We could feel the power of the Spirit of God take hold of him, because as prayer was concluded, all his strength left his body and he slid off of the chair onto the ground. The spirit of repentance was visual as he cried and said he repented of his sins and wanted to be baptized.

In all of my years in the Church,

there was only one other occasion where I personally experienced anything similar. One by one, each person present asked for prayer, tears streaming down the cheeks of several young men. One brother rode his bicycle from town about 15 KM away. The dirt road leading up to

(Continued on Page 4)



Singing inside rented church building in Malawi, Africa.

Malawi, Africa

Continued from Page 3

Brother Nyirenda's was very rough and caused his bicycle to slide throwing him to the ground. That did not discourage him at all; he picked himself up and continued to peddle his bike to the compound. He had a deep cut under his chin which later required several stitches. With a bandaid on the wound, he joined the first group of converts walking about a mile or so to the flowing Mzimba River to be baptized. The water was very low, because there was a lack of rain. His name is Wilson Momezulu.

It would be physically impossible for us to remain or attend to the spiritual needs of those persons who would be requesting baptism. My brothers and I had been praying, that God would in some way reveal His will as to who his choice was for ordination

into the Priesthood. We met on several occasions seeking God's direction, and it was unanimous that both Brothers Nyirenda and Gausi were God's choices to be the Shepherds of the flock and attend to those baptized brothers and sisters in this part of the world.

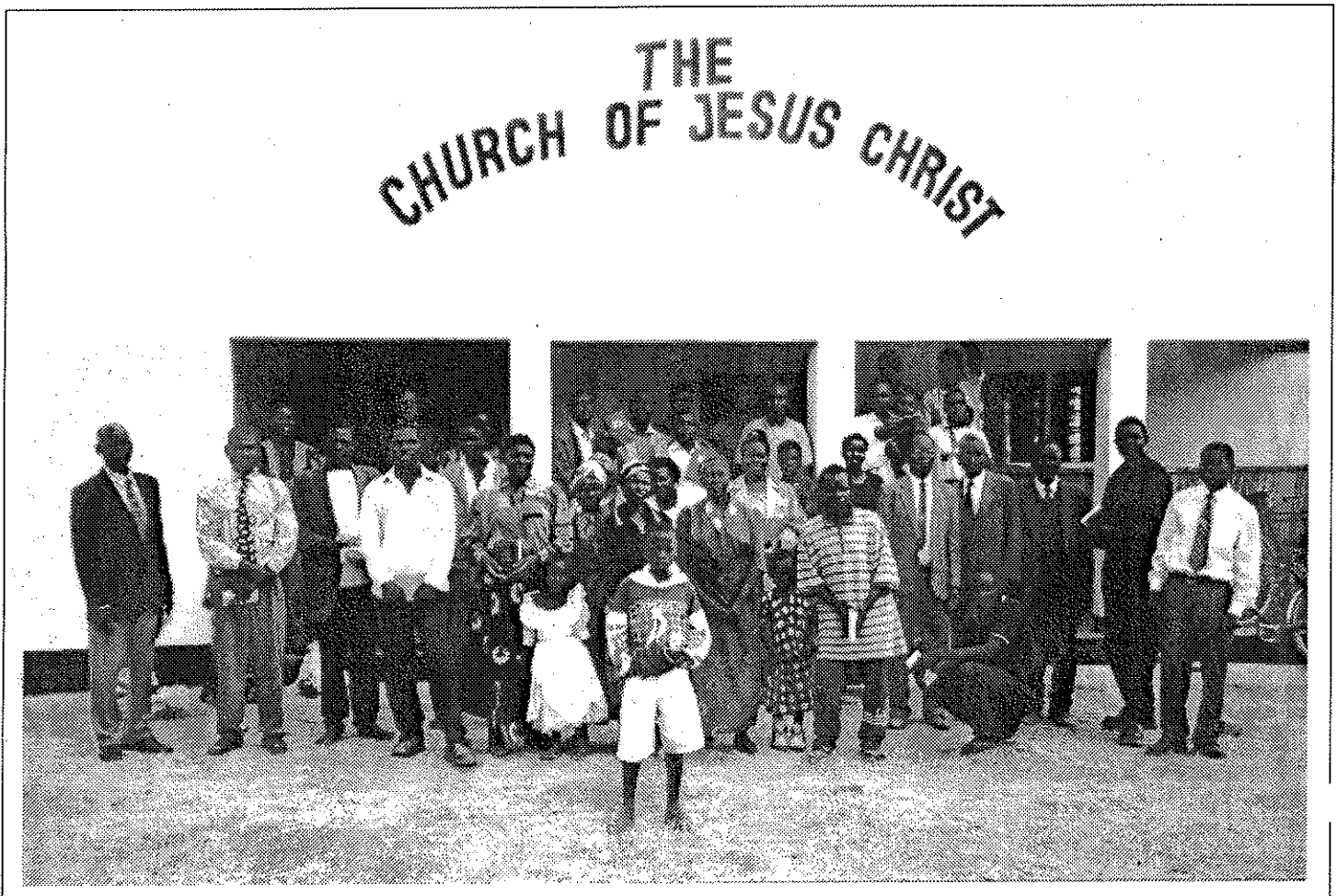
Brother John DiBattista placed a call to Brother Paul Palmeri requesting approval to ordain these two brothers into the Priesthood, and approval was granted. Later that same evening, a call was placed to Brother Philip Jackson informing him what we had experienced. Both of these brothers were pleased and gave their blessings for the news.

We were pleased to have Brother Cipeng Kapend from the Republic of the Congo arrive on Monday afternoon the 25th of August to witness the ordinations and baptisms. Tuesday the 26th of August, the first ordinations into

the Priesthood were performed in Malawi. Brother Philip Arcuri set apart Brother Frederick Nyirenda by washing his feet, and Brother Lyle Criscuolo ordained him. Brother Lyle Criscuolo set Brother Quabaniso Manase apart by washing his feet and Brother Joseph Perri ordained him. These two brothers immediately began to take part in the anointing, baptisms and blessing of little children.

One of our missions was to secure a building for worship. Finally located was a building in the town of Mzimba. Negotiating with the landowner, we were able to enter into a rental agreement. Brother Wilson is well known in the town, and was instrumental in getting a painter to paint the building, lettering the name of the Church on the building and sign post, making benches, a pulpit and

(Continued on Page 10)



Group baptized in Malawi, Africa



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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

The story of Thanksgiving is not only a story of giving thanks, but it is a story of inclusion: If history is correct, it was a time when the Pilgrims AND the Native Americans met together for a huge feast to thank God for the bountiful harvest they had received. The Pilgrims INCLUDED the Native Americans in their celebration. In the scripture above, we are taught that God is not a respecter of persons. This means that anyone who seeks to serve God in truth and righteousness is INCLUDED in the family of God. It doesn't matter if they are Jew or Gentile, black or white, Spanish speaking or English speaking. It doesn't matter if they are rich or poor, male or female, young or old, skinny or fat. The scripture teaches us that out of one blood, God made all the nations of the earth.

Unfortunately, the world around us is a world of EXCLUSION. Simply put, people organize themselves into groups, businesses, clubs, and even churches with people who are similar to them. This is how pride gets rooted. Then, conflict erupts between these groups, as we have seen throughout time and throughout the world today. One group feels they are better than another group, and would never think of associating with each other.

Fortunately, Jesus has shown us a better way. He has shown us that even the smallest, frailest, most unassuming person can do extraordinary things for Him. He has showered His gifts upon His people with no particular preference. If we look at God's people throughout the world, we see that every race, ethnic group, gender, and age is represented. If there are "groups" who have not accepted the Lord, it has nothing to do with their skin color, or language, or level of prosperity. If people do not accept the Lord, it is because they don't want to.

In The Book of Mormon, there was a time when the Zoramite people became very prideful, and began to EXCLUDE themselves from the poor who had built their sanctuary. The poor were not allowed in to worship with them. They felt they were prosperous, and the poor were not prosperous, because the favor of God was upon them and not the poor.

"Now when Alma saw this his heart was grieved; for he saw that they were a wicked and a perverse people; yea, he saw that their hearts were set upon gold, and upon silver, and upon all manner of fine goods" (Alma 31:24).

Alma, seeing how prideful the Zoramites had become, was sickened. He later went to the poor to preach the truth of the Gospel to them, and had much success. This is a perfect example of how we cannot judge the righteousness of a person by the prosperity they have achieved, nor can we judge the righteousness of a person by any other means. The homeless person on the street corner, and the top executive of a company, both has the same opportunity to become a son or daughter of Jesus Christ. The Lord doesn't care about our circumstances or our background; He only cares about the sincerity of our heart.

In the Church today, we have to examine our thoughts and actions. Are we INCLUSIVE of others, or do we shy away from people who are different than we are? Do we show the same level of love and attention to anyone who walks through the doors of our branches or missions? Do we feel there are certain people who are more important to God than others? These thoughts can be very destructive to not only us, but to the Church. This Thanksgiving, let's remember the lesson of the Pilgrims and Native Americans. Let us remember that God is no respecter of persons. Let us see others with our hearts and not our eyes. Let us INCLUDE anyone who will come and partake of the bountiful spiritual feast God has prepared for every one of us.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork



Do Not Be Unequally Yoked (II Corinthians 6:14)

Dear Friends,

In the days of the Bible and The Book of Mormon, motors and engines were not yet invented. People used animals to pull their wagons or chariots to carry their packages. They used oxen and other strong animals to pull a plow through the hard earth to dig a trench to plant seeds in.

Some of the oxen were lazy. Some were sick or old and very tired. Some oxen were more wild and did not want to settle down and quietly do their work. People soon learned that it was important to match their oxen or their horses. It was not important what their color was, or if that matched. It was important that animals who were put together to do a work were the same kind of worker.

If a lazy or weak animal was put with a strong worker animal, they would drag it down so it could not move along and accomplish everything that it would. If a wild, stubborn animal was put with a peaceful, good-tempered animal, they would trouble that creature unbearably. Animals are very much like people. They have their own ways of doing things and things they like and dislike to do.

As humans, we have a physical side, an emotional side, an intellectual side (our thinking side) and we have a spiritual side. Sometimes when people are finding a great friend, or a person to love, they only look at one of those four sides. They may, for example,

really like the way the other person looks. But until they get to know that friend, they will not know if the person's mind is what they like. They will not know if the person is actually mean, or selfish, or always thinking about themselves first. And they will not know if that person is strong spiritually and has a secret helper called Jesus.

For people who believe in Jesus, there is always hope even when things go wrong. Friends who love Jesus know how to say they are sorry when they have done something wrong that has hurt you. When you have a big problem that you have to work out, if your friend loves Jesus, they can pray for you and that gives you wonderful support. They do not have to try to change you or trick you into changing. They can talk to you with love, and love you anyway just the way you are.

The best thing about friends who love Jesus is that they are happier and stronger inside than people who are just using their own ideas and strength to get through life. Think about some time when something bad happened to you or you were very scared about a big problem. Did you ask Jesus for help? Do you remember just how He helped you get through that terrible time? Did you have other people praying too?

People without a happy, growing spiritual side try to solve their problems by other ways. They run away or talk mean about everyone else, or take pills to escape, or drink alcohol and blame others. They usually want their way over everyone else's. Who wants to live like that? If you read your Bible, you will see what the Lord thinks we should do.

The Apostle Paul said in II

Corinthians, chapter 6, verse fourteen, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion [what is the same] hath light with darkness [good with bad]?"

Otherwise, we are just like strong, working oxen. We need to be working through life with someone who also knows how to pray. We need friends who realize that there is a right and a wrong way to live and behave. We need to know that God does and will take care of all of our terrible problems and heartache. We need to be able to pray with that special friend and to talk about Jesus' advice so that we know what to do.

If we do this, if we pick people who are equal in their belief and hope in Jesus, we will have a rich, full life. We will be able to work out the

(Continued on Page 11)

WORD SEARCH

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Southeast Region Conference

The Southeast Region Conference took place on the 16th and 17th of August with two Apostles present and a good representation of Evangelists, Elders and Teachers. The Region President introduced our conference by welcoming all those who were present for the deliberation of business in this first session. He recognized Apostles Paul Benyola and Ike Smith in their official capacity as assigned Apostles to the Southeast Region.

After prayer and singing our business got under way and ran very smoothly as it did through the entire conference. There was a question and answer session conducted by Brother Paul Benyola and Brother Ike Smith on how to represent The Church of Jesus Christ when preaching the Gospel as well as the conduct of our personal lives. Every Elder was given an opportunity to take part in the discussion. The outcome of a session of this type proves the necessity of having them from time to time to clear up any differences of opinion that may develop during the normal course of duties in the Ministry. We value the wisdom of years of experience gained by each ordained officer during the exercise of their duties as Elders and Teachers throughout the Church. We thank our brother Apostles for their love and concern for the work of the Ministry and for the membership of the Church to which we are all dedicated.

Our afternoon session was devoted mainly to the reports of the activities of the various offices during the last six months as well as providing some Established Missions, which are understaffed, with help from other branches.

The Presiding Elders gave reports of the developments within their local areas and the prospects for growth, which was one of the main thrusts of this conference. Everyone seemed to be enthusiastic about bringing more souls into the Church through the Lets Grow Program. This program calls for workers in every capacity of the

Church to give their testimony and to invite people to come and hear the Gospel Restored. We were encouraged to take part in Fast and Prayer meetings asking God for His blessings to prevail upon the Church as we see the conditions around us in the world are deteriorating at a rapid pace. The world needs the Gospel of Love!

After the morning and afternoon session of conference the sisters of the Lake Worth Branch provided a delicious meal for all those in attendance. We want to thank them for the time and the effort they put into preparing and serving the saints at conference. The providence was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by everyone. God Bless each of them.

The evening meeting was conducted by the Lake Worth Branch. A large crowd was in attendance to witness as well as partake in a program of singing and noting some miracles of the past as well as from the present showing that God is the same today, yesterday and will be forever. Some of the miracles included the restoration of sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, protection from harm, and deliverance from severe affliction such as blocked arteries that were confirmed to be so by the doctors, and they were baffled to find them clear prior to operating. The operation was then cancelled. Praise God that we receive deliverance from time to time.

After such a wonderful evening recounting the miracles of the past and present the congregation felt to ask God for one more miracle of deliverance. We all joined hands and asked Brother Ken Staley to offer a prayer to God for Brother Dominic Thomas. The Spirit of God permeated our building as the prayer was being offered in anticipation of a miracle on Brother Dominic's behalf.

Our meeting was concluded by Brother Sam Risola inviting everyone to be with us in the morning for Sunday Service at 9:30 a.m. Our meeting was dismissed in prayer.

Sunday morning a large crowd assembled for praise and worship to Almighty God. We were led in a season of congregational singing prior to the opening of our service. It is

good to sit among the saints and blend our voices in praise to our great Creator for the many blessings bestowed by Him upon us. As the singing concluded, Region President Brother Sam Risola welcomed everyone to our gathering of the Southeast Branches and Missions including Brother John Buffa who was visiting from the Great Lakes Region. He also acknowledged Brother Dominic Rose was present with us today. Brother Sam reminded us to remember those that are afflicted including Brother Dominic Thomas. Brother Miguel Bicelis opened the service in prayer after which the Lake Worth Branch favored us with a musical selection and a trio of young brothers sang *My God Thou Seest Me*. The service continued as the saints waited in anticipation of the Word of God being delivered by the Holy Spirit to edify and refresh each one. The first speaker, Brother Alphonso Hopkins, used the 3rd Chapter of Acts concerning the Apostles Peter and John and the miracle of healing at the Beautiful Gate. Brother Hopkins said even though the world in general is not interested in the Plan of Salvation, we the Church must remain close to God to be used as Peter and John in the Latter Days.

He was followed by Brother John Buffa rehearsing some of the events of his recent missionary trip to Italy where he saw the needs of others and how we need to be sensitive to both God's calling and the cry of mankind in general.

Apostle Ike Smith was our next speaker and continued by reading from the 34th chapter of 2nd Nephi concerning the latter day blessings that await the people of God. God will remember His Saints and be gracious unto them (Isaiah 30:19).

Apostle Paul Benyola summed it up encouraging us to invite others to hear the Gospel by using the invitation **to come and see, come and dine, and worship God with us**. Brother Dennis Moraco offered the closing prayer. At the conclusion of this conference we can say with the poet, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."



A Singspiration at Inner City, Detroit, MI Branch

By Sister Lynne Nieves

On the tail wind of the beautiful spirit felt at the GMBA Campout came a "rush" of desire and excitement for the members of the Detroit Inner City Branch as we welcomed the Youth In Action by sponsoring an MBA Region Singspiration on Saturday, July 19, 2003. What a joy to see all the young people allowing themselves to be sent where the Lord saw fit and giving up their natural desires to be used of God and do His much needed work.

There were about sixty brothers, sisters and friends in attendance from the east coast to the west. Brother Patrick Gianetti from the Phoenix, Arizona Branch led the singing as the meeting was introduced. Brother Mario Zaccagnini opened the service by proclaiming the joys, miracles, and baptisms that had already happened in

the past two days, following the camp. Brother Dean Coppa of Branch #4 opened our meeting in prayer. Brother Jordan Champine, President of the Inner City MBA, expressed his gratitude for the privilege of gathering with the saints to thank and praise God for His goodness, mercy and love.

Sister Erin Light from San Diego, California played and sang a song she wrote very appropriately called, *What Are We Waiting For?* The brothers from the Inner City Branch played their guitars and the congregation sang several songs from our Spanish song book. Brother Jordan invited the young people up to sing. Several testified, all with sincerity of heart and anticipation of moving God's mighty arm in their upcoming endeavors to spread His Gospel in this part of the vineyard. They all gave honor and glory, even in their youth, to the love and POWER of our God!

Brother Jordan gave a beautiful farewell to Brother Tony Moraco from Branch #2, who was leaving for Florida to return to his home branch and family. Brother Tony expressed his gratitude and said that he had made it a matter of prayer and felt the prompting of the spirit to return to Florida. He also expressed a deep

love in his heart for all the brothers and sisters here in his ancestral state of Michigan.

At the request of Brother Mark Cotellesse of Branch #2, the congregation sang his favorite song, *He Changed My Life Completely*. It is his testimony that this song is representative of his life.

Brother Jordan thanked everyone for coming and reminded us to meet at the water's edge for the baptism of Sister Kelly Retludge. The congregation stood and closed with hymn #106, *Set Her Free*, and on the last verse we formed a circle to close in prayer. When the circle was completed, the spirit of unity enveloped the room. Brother Jordan left it open for whoever felt directed to close in prayer. A new brother in the Gospel, Brother Joe Gonzales, began to pray. The sincerity and sweet spirit in the words that flowed from the brother's heart filled the room with such humility. Surely God's heart was pricked with compassion for His people. Brother Joe prayed for God's mercy for all in attendance, whatever their needs may be, and for the upcoming week of Youth In Action Missionary endeavors. Afterward, we fellowshiped and enjoyed refreshments.



Blessed Day in Anaheim, California

By Sister Sandy Sullivan

On Sunday, August 24th, 2003, while at the Pacific Region MBA Campout, Jesse Moore, 15 years old and Darren Henderson, 16 years old (both from the Anaheim, California Branch) asked for their baptism. It was one of those especially wonderfully blessed meetings.

Sunday, September 7th, 2003, brought us to the water's edge near

Anaheim to witness the miracle of a changed heart manifested in the beautiful baptisms of our two young brothers.

Brother Darren was baptized by his uncle, Brother Larry Henderson from Branch #2 in Michigan. Brother Jesse was baptized by his grandfather, Brother Jim Moore from Imperial, Pennsylvania. It was a blessing to watch these brothers take their loved ones into the waters of baptism. After they were baptized, Sister Dottie Henderson, Brother Darren's mother, said she "felt angels all around the lake."

When the ministers were about to lay hands on the young men for the confirmation of the Holy Ghost, the Lord blessed Sister Emilia Dominguez with a vision as follows: "In the moment that our ministers knelt down

to pray and as they were praying, a light came up from the earth and rocks spewed up as well. The light was white and very bright as it came from the opening in the earth."

During the confirmation prayer of these brothers, Brother Matt Picciuto spoke in tongues. Later in the meeting Bro Isidro Dominguez related that while Brother Jim Huttenberger was praying and a few seconds before Brother Matt spoke in tongues he heard the words, "Listen to my servants and I will fill you with fire." During the same prayer Sister Alicia Dominguez had a vision. She stood to testify of what God had given her as follows: "When they were praying for Jesse so that he could receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, a sword was put in his hands; but in the same moment a man dressed in black appeared and

was fighting in order to remove the sword when suddenly Brother Matt Piccuito spoke in tongues and the man dressed in black left." What powerful experiences!

Brother Jim Moore and Brother Larry Henderson spoke to us sharing many wonderful thoughts and experiences and beseeching anyone who had not yet committed their lives to Christ not to put it off any longer.

Brother Lloyd and Sister Margaret Henderson, Brother Darren's grandparents, were there to share in this special day. They have not been able to attend church for a very long time due to Sister Margaret's health. They were both anointed that day. Please keep them in your prayers.

What a powerful and uplifting day we enjoyed and Brother Darren and Brother Jesse will not forget the extraordinary experiences God sent to bless their special day. Our young people are being blessed in so many wonderful ways. God is surely raising up an army of sincere and dedicated servants. May God bless all of you.

Missionary Work: At Home in the Domestic Field

Atlanta, Georgia Branch

A brother once said the hardest missionary work you may ever do is in your own backyard. The brothers and sisters in Atlanta have taken this quote as a challenge; and they're meeting that challenge through fasting, prayer, testifying and "publishing" glad tidings.

In early spring, the Atlanta Priesthood unanimously voted to create an outreach program in the northwest Metro area. Since it is in the western portion of Cobb County, the effort is called the *West Cobb Outreach*. Beginning in May and ending in December, Evangelists Ken Staley and Mark Kovacic, with their families, are holding once-a-month meetings in West Cobb. The outreach includes flyer distribution, invitation

mailings, and phone solicitation, as well as face-to-face personal invitations. To date, over 220 flyers have been distributed in our neighborhoods and over thirty-five invitations mailed to friends and acquaintances and those once familiar with the Church, plus a number of phone calls and personal face-to-face invitations.

The first meeting, Memorial Day weekend, brought three visitors, people who were acquainted with The Church of Jesus Christ. As well, there were a number of brothers and sisters from Aliquippa, Detroit, Tampa, and the Treasure Coast Branches, as well as California, visiting and providing support for the start of the outreach. Apostle Paul Palmieri was the guest speaker, followed by Brother Rocco Benyola.

The second meeting saw two new acquaintances come for their first visit to one of our services. Although the gathering was small, we were encouraged by the attendance of these friends. In both meetings, all felt the Spirit and blessing of God.

To ease the community residents into coming to the Church, an open neighborhood picnic and an evening singspiration are being considered by the Branch. July 27th was the next Sunday outreach service, followed by one on August 31st.

Please remember us in your prayers that God's hand will move upon many more from our "backyard" to seek their soul salvation through the Restored Gospel. Please feel free to add your support through prayer or attendance.

Baptism in Hollywood, Florida

By Sister Nancy DiNardo

What a beautiful way to start our day—meeting at the water's edge! Brother Daniel Stone was baptized today July 27, 2003, by Brother John Catone, Sr. Brother John Catone offered a beautiful prayer at the water's shore. After we all drove back

to the branch, the saints began singing hymns of praise to the Lord. Brother John Catone spoke about baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost.

Brother Dennis Moraco continued with taking our challenges to the Lord! If we relied on ourselves we would make the wrong decisions. But we all know if we rely on the Lord we will never go wrong. There is a change in us when we give our life to the Lord. The journey does not end at the water's shore, it is the beginning. Brother Daniel Stone was confirmed by Brother John Catone. Our meeting was then turned over to testimony.

Sister Angie Stone relayed a beautiful experience she had while the elders were praying for direction. She opened her eyes and she had a vision. In front of her she saw her mother, Sister Fran DiNardo, in her regular seat. First she (Sister Fran) looked to her left and saw her son Anthony and his family, then she looked and saw Sister Angie and her family and she smiled. She then looked to her right and saw Brother Paul and his family and she looked at Sister Nancy and her family and smiled again. What a beautiful experience to have all of her children in the house of the Lord. That was Sister Fran's prayer to see all of her children there in the branch. At this time three of Sister Fran's eight grandchildren are baptized: Andrew, Gianna and Daniel. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Butler, Pennsylvania Baptism and Ordination

The Butler, Pennsylvania Mission has been blessed with a baptism and ordination of a Deacon recently. Because the group does not have a baptismal site yet, it was decided to visit the McKees Rocks Branch on August 10 to accomplish the ordinations. On that day Robert Fenhagen was baptized and Brother Joseph Michelessi was ordained a Deacon.

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Butler, Pennsylvania

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In the meantime, another gentleman, Jeffrey Harris, had also made his intentions known at McKees Rocks that he wanted to be baptized, so it was decided to perform both baptisms and the ordination on the same day. It was a beautiful setting as the two congregations met at the site and Brother Fenhagen was baptized by Evangelist Carl J. Frammolino and Brother Harris was immersed by Evangelist Paul Ciotti, Sr.

At the McKees Rocks Branch, Brother Fenhagen was confirmed by Brother Frammolino and Brother Harris was confirmed by Brother Ralph Ciotti. (A companion story from the McKees Rocks Branch further details Brother Harris' conversion.) Brother Robert Bradwell washed Brother Michelessi's feet and Brother Anthony Ricci ordained him a Deacon.

Brother Fenhagen had been attending the Butler Mission for about a year. He said the Lord had been working with him and he realized the necessity for being baptized. He had testified at the Mission that God had helped him to change his life and he was very grateful, as he remembered how wonderfully he has been blessed. Since his baptism in The Church of Jesus Christ he has stated, "I hope to continue to allow my relationship with God to continue to grow and become

more and more a part of my life. As someone who has gone through a fair share of life's trials, I look forward to the continued peace of mind and increased happiness this relationship can afford. I thank all who have helped me in this journey and particularly, I thank God."

Brother Michelessi has been a tireless worker for God and the Gospel since his baptism about six years ago. He has been very diligent in giving his testimony and has been very devoted most recently to bringing individuals to the services. Experiences depicting his working for the Lord had been received about his calling.

Malawi, Africa

Continued from Page 4

communion table. The man (Christopher Namba) who was hired to paint the building had a helper; however, when he heard the singing and our preaching and teaching, he could not continue painting and said to his helper, "You continue to paint; I am going inside to listen and observe what is happening. It did not take him long to repent of his past life and ask for baptism. He said to us, "God sent you brothers here because he knew the life I was living and what I needed." He had been in jail numerous times for different reasons and many people in the area knew of the life he had led. His testimony is his life will never be the same and will never return back to the life he was living. He told us, when our mission to Malawi was completed and we return home, he was going to place an article in the local newspaper relating his conversion and that of his wife and their baptisms into The Church of Jesus Christ. Thank God for the marvelous testimony of Brother Christopher Namba. Brothers Mgomezulu and Banda were ordained Teachers and Brother Namba and Billy Nyirenda were ordained Deacons. Sisters Susan Mgomezulu and Laurence Nyirenda were ordained Deaconesses.

We were given the task to

register the Church in Malawi during our visit; however we had difficulty trying to contact the person with whom we were to meet. Brother DiBattista, after spending several days with us, had to leave for his mission to Italy. The morning of his flight, Brother Philip and I drove him to the airport, had prayer for his safe journey, bid farewell and began our search for the Registrar's office. Nearing the capital building, we thought we were in the area but had no clue with whom we were to speak with. Driving the vehicle into a dirt road, I saw a man coming towards me with a carrying case under his arm, so I called out to him to come near the window of the van.

I asked him if he knew where the registrar's office was, and he asked why. I told him we were looking to register our Church in Malawi. In the meantime two other men came up to the van and began speaking to him. They exchanged words, which we did not understand; they left and he told us he would take us to a building. Arriving at the building, we went inside and this man spoke to an attendant who gave directions for us to drive to another area. Driving to the area, this man showed us where to go. When we reached the buildings he motioned for us to stop, park the van and follow him. He led us into the building and up to the second floor where the offices of the Ministry of Justice were, took us into a room, and introduced us to one of the clerks on duty. We were in the room only a few minutes, when it dawned on us to thank this man for his help. Opening the door and looking up and down the hall and outside, this man had disappeared; he could not be found anywhere. Was he a messenger sent from God to take us to the place so we could speak with the right person to get the correct information we were looking for? Our answer would have to be in the affirmative, "YES!"

The Chief Judicial Clerk gave us all the information needed to register the Church. Even though we were somewhat disappointed we could not fulfill this part of our mission, we were given valuable information on how to proceed. To verify what we were told,

Happy
Thanksgiving
to all our
readers.

we stopped at the US Embassy, spoke to the assistant to the US Ambassador, and she gave us the exact same information but not in detail as the clerk at the Ministry of Justice. The Nigerian Membership has a saying, "God is good all the time."

The last day in Malawi, we received a telephone call from Mary and James Ndende, the parents of Sister Gertrude Diziko of the South Bend, Indiana Mission, inquiring about the church their daughter is now a member of. We explained as much as we could in the short time we were together. Their invitation to us was, when we prepare to make a return trip back to Malawi, to notify them, because there was a fairly large group of people they wanted us to talk to about our faith. Another opportunity presented to us to preach the Restored Gospel in the capital city (Lilongwe) of Malawi.

It would be impossible to write all that took place during our visit. This trip has to be one of the most outstanding and rewarding trips I have made to Africa over the last 23 years. The Church of Jesus Christ has been established and organized in Malawi, building on a foundation that had its beginning in March of this year by Brothers DiBattista and Gehly. We baptized 35 people, ordained two Elders, two Teachers, two Deacons, and two Deaconesses. There are two meeting places. One is in the town of Mzimba, the other in the Chizowe Village. We blessed 15 Children. Our time was spent training, teaching, preaching, instructing Church procedure, etc. and answering questions.

It was mentioned very briefly in this article that Brother Cipeng Kapend from the Republic of the Congo joined us on our trip. He was baptized and sat in all of our meetings, listening to all of our presentations. His purpose for being with us on this trip was to acquaint him with our Faith and Doctrine, Church structure, procedures etc. There is interest in the Faith and Doctrine among the people Brother Cipeng has been meeting with, therefore the anticipation that some time next year an exploratory trip will be made to his country. The Congo is

another country in Africa where a spark of fire has been kindled. Brother Cipeng was very impressed with what he saw and heard.

To conclude, the words of Alma 29:8-9 express my feelings as I write this article, "For behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom all that he seeth fit that they should have, therefore we see that the Lord doth counsel in wisdom, according to that which is just and true. I know that which the Lord hath commanded me, and I glory in it. I do not glory of myself, but I glory in that which the Lord hath commanded me; yea, and this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy."

May God's blessing remain with our beloved brothers and sisters in the new Mission in Malawi.

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The Children's Corner

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troubles. We will be able to ask God to break our bad habits and make us better people. We will be better people. So think about who you are choosing as friends. Find believers as friends. When you are older, marry believers in The Church of Jesus Christ. Be equally yoked.

With love,
Sister Jan

Children Blessed

Devin Richard Donley, son of Richard and Tammy Donley, was blessed on July 6th, 2003 in the Perry, Ohio Branch.

Karley Morrison Way, daughter of Michael S. and Kathleen J. (Frammolino) Way, was blessed on August 16, 2003 through the Saline, Michigan Mission.

Ariahna Rose David, daughter of Sister Heather David and Derek David was blessed on September 21, 2003 in the Dedham, Massachusetts Mission.

Dawson William Gehly, son of Brother Matthew and Sister Tabitha Gehly was blessed on May 11, 2003 at the Greensburg, Pennsylvania Branch.

Hailey Grace Cisson, daughter of Kirt and Carri Cisson, was blessed on September 7, 2003 at the Greensburg, Pennsylvania Branch.

Paolo Antonio DiCenzo, son of Brother Panfilo and Sister Chirstina DiCenzo was blessed on September 7, 2003 in the McKees Rocks, PA Branch.

Taryn Schmalz, granddaughter of Sister Ida Matthews was blessed on September 7, 2003 in the Herndon, Virginia Branch.

Roderick Lindsey Means, grandson of Sister Mamie Means was blessed on August 10, 2003 in the Spartanburg, South Carolina Mission.

Gabrielle Vianne, daughter of Brother Kevin and Sister Angela Jasmin was blessed on September 7, 2003 in the Lake Worth, Florida Branch.

Benjamin James Draskovich, son of Brother James and Alicia Draskovich was blessed on August 3, 2003 in the Hollywood, Florida Branch.

Dominic Christos, son of Chris and Jan Frentzos was blessed on January 21, 2003 in the New Orleans, Louisiana Mission.

* WEDDINGS *

Sister Alanna Rabe and Daniel Wiktorowicz were united in holy matrimony in Anaheim, California on June 21, 2003.

Ordinations

Sister Jesse B. Scaglione was ordained a Deaconess in Herndon, Virginia Branch on September 21, 2003. Her feet were washed by Sister Iva Bordeaux, and she was ordained by Brother Chatman Young.

Brother Richard Scaglione III was ordained a Deacon in the Herndon, Virginia Branch. His feet were washed by Brother Clarence A. (Chip) Smith, Jr. and he was ordained by Brother Richard L. Scaglione, Jr.

Spiritual Anniversaries

Sister Virginia (Ginny) Laktash of the Roscoe, Pennsylvania Branch celebrated her 65th spiritual anniversary on August 7th, 2003.

Sister Carmella D'Amico of the Rochester, New York Mission celebrated her 70th spiritual anniversary on July 27th, 2003.

Sister Antionette Giansante of the Lockport, New York Mission celebrated her 70th spiritual anniversary on July 27th, 2003.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Brother Ted Enick was baptized on August 24th, 2003 in the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Paul Ciotti Sr., and confirmed by Brother Richard Lawson.

Sister Joan A. Ricco was baptized on June 15th, 2003 in the Perry, Ohio Branch. She was baptized by Brother Vince Gibson and confirmed by Brother Frank Giovannone.

Sister Celestina Drobek was reinstated on July 13th, 2003 in the Rochester, New York Mission.

Brother Darren Henderson was baptized on September 7, 2003 in the Anaheim, California Branch. He was baptized by Brother Larry Henderson and confirmed by Brother Matt Piccuito.

Brother Jesse Moore was baptized on September 7, 2003 in the Anaheim, California Branch. He was baptized by Brother Jim Moore and confirmed by Brother Jim Huttenberger.

Sister Stephanny Tamayo was baptized on June 15, 2003 in the Anaheim, California Branch. She was baptized by Brother Jim Huttenberger and confirmed by Brother Matt Piccuito.

Brother Antonio Mercado was baptized on April 27, 2003 in the Anaheim, California Branch. He was baptized by Brother Flip Palacios and confirmed by Brother Rudy Meo.

Brother Robert Steven Moyer was baptized on September 28, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Brother Brett Gibson and confirmed by Brother Don Ross.

Sister Heather Paula Moyer was baptized on September 28, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother Brett Gibson and confirmed by Brother Paul A. Palmieri.

Sister Megan Elaine Stitzel (Gibson) was baptized on September 28, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother David DeLuca and confirmed by Brother Tony Ross.

Sister Laurie Jean DeLuca was baptized on September 28, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. She was baptized by Brother David DeLuca and confirmed by Brother John M. D'Antonio.

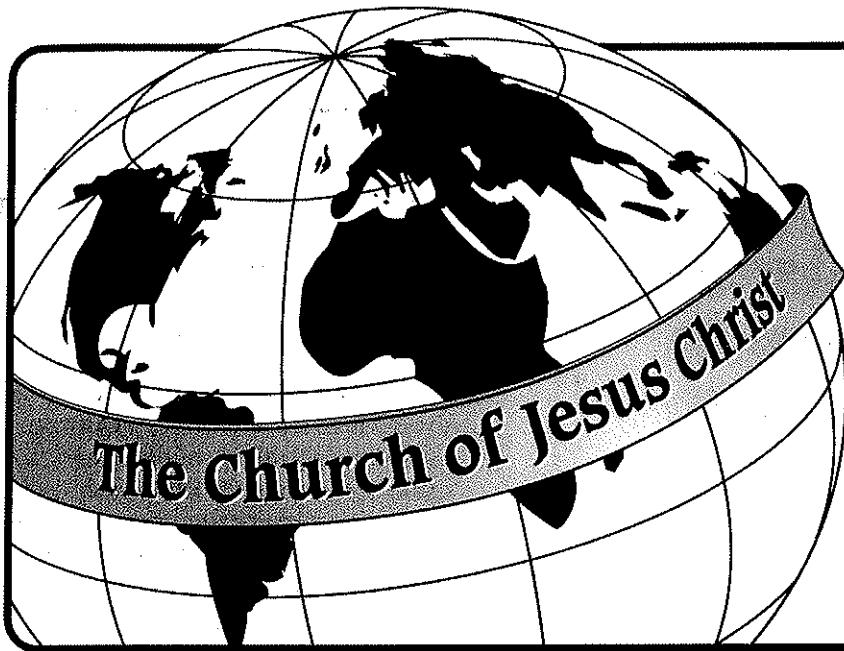
Brother Peter Martin Oestreicher was baptized on September 28, 2003 in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch. He was baptized by Apostle Paul Palmieri, and confirmed by Brother Joe Ross.

Address Change

Name _____

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Phone _____



The Gospel News

World Headquarters Monongahela, PA, USA

December, 2003

Volume 59, No. 12

A Key for Italy

By Evangelist Joel Gehly

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Rev. 3:7-8).

Evangelist John DiBattista and I recently traveled to Frankfurt, Germany, to spend some time with Brother Giovanni and Sister Filomena Marino. This faithful brother and sister are from the area of San Demetrio, Italy, but have resided in Germany for many years. Over the past 10 to 12 years sporadic visits have been made to encourage and strengthen them in the Gospel. We have found love, humility, dedication, and a sincere devotion to Jesus Christ. Being spiritually alone in Germany, we have witnessed that this couple has turned to Christ for strength and spiritual sustenance. Brother Giovanni has become a diligent student of the scriptures and has a great love for the Restored

Gospel. Sister Filomena is one of the most humble Sisters anywhere in the world and God has blessed her with the gift of dreams and frequently the gift of spiritual hearing—audibly hearing a heavenly voice give encouragement or instruction.

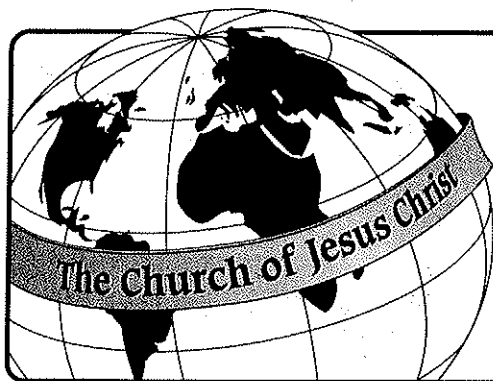
Although our brother and sister have made trips to visit the Church in San Demetrio in the past year, it had been over a year since anyone from the Church in America had been able to visit them in Germany. More recently, we have observed God

working with and directing them back to the Church in San Demetrio. However, concerns of life (children and grandchildren, work, etc.) have kept them from accomplishing God's plan and desire. During the last year, God has specifically moved upon them through dreams and experiences to change the "someday" plan to return to Italy into the "time is now" plan. Sister Filomena has been blessed with a series of dreams that together show

(Continued on Page 10)



Brother Giovanni and Sister Filomena Marino



A message from the Seventy

Mexicali Weekend

By Sister Michelle Huttenberger

The Southwest and Pacific Regions had the privilege to visit the Mexicali Mission on September 27 and 28, 2003. Thirty-five brothers, sisters, and young people from these two regions traveled across the border to fellowship with and work for the Seed of Joseph in that part of the vineyard.

The temperature peaked at over one hundred degrees on Saturday afternoon when the group arrived in Mexicali. Nevertheless, with the Lord's help, the brothers and sisters accomplished productive physical labor around the building, including replacing light fixtures, cleaning the Sunday School room, and repainting portions of the building. In addition, the brethren installed a much-needed new sink (with running water) in the church's restroom. Later in the afternoon, the youth canvassed the neighborhood directly around the church, inviting the community to the Saturday night and Sunday morning services. We were pleased to see a few visitors attend. Saturday evening, one of the visitors requested prayer from the ministry for a physical infirmity.

Brother Justin Paxon opened the Saturday evening service, expressing joy at seeing the members of the Church so excited to do the work of the Lord, just as in days of old. He read Genesis 49:22-26 and encouraged the brothers and sisters from Mexicali to press forward, because God promised to always be with

them. A beautiful season of speaking followed as some of the young men spoke about the goodness of the Lord.

When the ministry opened the service for testimony, Sister Cecilia Felix told the congregation how she worried about driving to the church building because, after crossing the border, her directions to the church existed only in her memory. She told how the Lord directed her through the maze of streets, and she arrived at the church without a problem! Brother Rudy Carrillo closed the service by saying that our walk with the Lord should be like Sister Cecilia's experience; we must continue our journey through life with the Lord as our guide. It was a beautiful time of praise and worship.

Sunday morning, the young people opened the service with several songs. Brother Bob McDonnell spoke about the wonderful hope we have in Christ, our Lord. Reading Mormon 5:2, he reminded the Seed of Joseph that they will be the ones to save Israel, just as Joseph saved his brethren during the famine. Even though we may come from different places, he said, we are all one, having the same hope for the future of the Church.

Later, Brother Arturo Tostado shared that he had been given a scripture earlier that morning while thinking and praying to the Lord. It was 2nd Nephi 31:20, "Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end,

behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life." It was a confirmation of the beautiful message that had been given, prepared at the throne of God for His people.

The saints of God always look forward to visiting Mexicali. Upon being asked what she loved most about Mexicali, Sister Mary Duncan immediately said, "the wonderful spirit." Sister Rachel Smith said, "There is nothing better than working one-on-one with the Seed of Joseph and seeing the commission of the Church in action."

The brothers and sisters had a beautiful time with the members in Mexicali and will continue to support the mission with visits and prayers.

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**Merry
Christmas
to all our readers.**

Sermons from the Scriptures

By Brother John Bordeaux

We go to church expecting to hear a great sermon and be feed spiritually. But what do we do on other days? I need a sermon every-day and have found that the scriptures are full of sermons and spiritual food. But we must search and read in a discerning and critical way—critical in the sense of searching and seeking ways to apply the messages to our lives, not just reading for historical purposes.

Upon reading the Editorial Viewpoint in the September *Gospel News*, I was struck by how I had gotten the same message by reading Romans 1:18 – 3:2. That passage had been on my mind for several months. Of course, the message correlated exactly with what Paul wrote to the Ephesians. We must set a high saintly standard to please God and exemplify it in our relations with others so that they know we are God's children.

Romans 1:18 talks about God's wrath against the sins of men, and in verse 21 through 32, Paul lists a multitude of sins that we should shun. If we can see our actions on this list, we have some serious soul searching to do. We have to go to God often, asking for forgiveness and that He will take away the weaknesses that cause us to transgress His commandments. Sister Marie Prescott has a favorite hymn that speaks directly to the problem. The fourth stanza of *An Evening Prayer* is her powerful request of God – "*Forgive the sins I have confessed to Thee; Forgive the secret sins I do not see; O guide me, love me and my keeper be, Amen.*"

In Romans 2, Paul talks about the impartiality of God's judgment. Verses 5 and 6 state, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds."

Now a sermon from the scripture to me. Let us take Romans 2:17 – 3:2 and apply it to ourselves. Mentally substitute saint for Jew, sinner for gentile, commandments for law, and baptism for circumcision. I have entered words and thoughts in parentheses that give me a better understanding of the original text and show how this scripture, though written to the Romans, can apply to us today.

Romans 2:17. Behold, thou art called a saint, and retest in (rely on) the commandments, and makest thy boast to God,

18. And knowest his will and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of (by) the commandments;

19. And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light to them which are in darkness,

20. An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the commandments. (Do we set the example for those with whom we come in contact? Do we instruct the youth around us so that they are firmly grounded in the Gospel, not just the words but the deeds also?)

21. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preaches a man should not steal, dost thou steal? (Let us address steal in a broader sense. Do we return to the cashier the excess change that was given to us? If we don't, we are a thief and have made the cashier appear a thief in his employer's eyes. I recently heard a story of the minister who was preaching on this subject of honesty and had a shopkeeper in the congregation. The minister made a purchase at the man's store and was given too much change. He returned it and told the merchant that he had made a mistake. The merchant said there was no mistake, but that he was checking to see if the minister practiced what he preached. Do we make personal purchases with the company credit card or use of the company stamp machine?)

22. Thou sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit

adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? (Do we look more for the material things of this world than to serving God? Remember, the material things are for just a season. They will rust and decay or the thief may come by night and take them away.)

23. Thou that makest thy boast of the commandments, through breaking the commandments dishonourest thou God? (We make a covenant with God, and if we break it one could say we bore false witness. We would be very displeased if someone broke a solemn pledge with us.)

24. For the name of God is blasphemed among the sinners through you (those who transgress), as it is written.

25. For baptism verily profiteth, if thou keepeth the commandments; but if thou be a breaker of the commandments, thy baptism is made unbaptism. (Repentance and baptism are the start, but we must continue to serve God in order to reap that final reward of a home with Him in His eternal kingdom. We most assuredly shall be lost if we fall away.)

26. Therefore if the unbaptism keep the righteousness of the commandments, shall not his unbaptism be counted for baptism? (This does not apply to saints who have heard the Gospel and been baptized. But Christ forgave the thief on the cross and said that he would be with Him in paradise.)

27. And shall not unbaptism (sinner) which is by nature, if it (he) fulfill the commandments, judge thee, who by the letter and baptism dost transgress (break) the commandments? (This takes us again to setting the example. If the sinner sees us transgress, he will ask, "What can you offer me?")

28. For he is not a saint, which is one outwardly (only); neither is that baptism, which is outward in the flesh (only): But he is a saint, which is one inwardly; and baptism is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter (only); whose praise is not of men,

(Continue on Page 10)



It is Time to Seek the Lord

By Sister Karen Progar
GMBA Editor

This year most of you had the opportunity to enjoy the GMBA Campout on line, if you were unable to join us in person. The wonderful opportunity painstakingly and lovingly assumed by the Katsaras family afforded many to enjoy frequent updates of campout activities and even hear portions of sermons. Our world is surely expanded by the Internet. Because of this blessing, it will be my goal to allow you to feel a portion of the spirit felt by those in attendance. When I think of the GMBA Campout held this year at the beautiful campus of Saginaw State University in Saginaw, Michigan, from July 12th through the 18th, I keep remembering the wonderful spirit of peace felt throughout the week. As I observed the campers, I saw groups sitting and sharing the blessings of God on numerous occasions. I saw children delighted to be in one another's company. I saw teachers truly enjoying the lessons prepared for their classes. I saw young people stepping up and taking on the responsibility of the children's choir and other camp functions. I saw bocce games played by our seasoned members. My overall observation of the camp was that there was a joyful peace during the entire event. It was as though, for that brief period of time, we were protected from worldly influences and the pressures of our daily lives.

Brother Nephi DeMercurio, Jr., our Camp Director, worked hard and chose people to work on his numerous committees who shared his thoughts as to what the theme, **It is Time to Seek the Lord**, means. The committees, who worked so tirelessly to accommodate the saints, are to be

commended and we trust the Lord will reward them as only He can.

Beginning with our Sunday service, we were encouraged by Brother Jason Monaghan to **seek the Lord** first that we might receive the first blessing. He further encouraged the young people to **seek the Lord** as Samuel did that the Lord might come to them personally, as well. He was followed by Apostle Peter Scolaro, who reminded us that as things happen in the world, we will have to take our place. He concluded by telling us that when the people of God are united, the ministry is inspired.

Apostle Paul Palmieri posed the questions, "What does the Lord want?" He continued by answering the question. The Lord wants us to be more righteous. He wants us to serve Him every day. He wants us to serve Him better every day. Brother Palmieri warned that this is the **time** for those who are not baptized to **seek the Lord**. He stated that this is a camp where we are challenged to do the work of the Lord. We are going to be challenged throughout the world. We are capable of fulfilling the goals. His final remark was very profound, as he pronounced a blessing on the congregation saying, "May the Lord fill you with a desire to be righteous."

This brief, abridged recap of our Sunday morning should give you an idea of the blessings we would come to enjoy the balance of the week. As I read my notes, I hate to leave any of the blessed advise we received out of this article, but space does not permit a complete reiteration of the wisdom that was shared. Below are just a few (or near quotes, I'm not a speed writer) from our brothers that you can read and consider for your own life:

Brother John DiBattista, "The Church of Jesus Christ is like a series of little lights lighting up the Earth."

Brother Jeff Giannetti, "When we **seek the Lord**, not only does it bless us, but also affects others."

Brother Dennis Moraco, "The schedule of our life is wonderful here [at camp]. The challenge is to maintain it after we leave here."

Brother Tom Everett, "Know how to take the hurdles, without

loosing your stride."

Apostle Joe Calabrese, "We need to get busy. The moment He [Jesus] came out of the water, He became a missionary."

During the week we enjoyed baptisms, and wonderful confirmation services. In one of those services, when our new sister from Taiwan was a part of the group being confirmed, a request was prayerfully made that God would manifest His gifts. Tongues came forth, the interpretation of which was, "This one have I called for her people. I have opened the door." We surely serve an awesome God who works with us today, just as He worked with our brothers and sisters of old. A number of experiences were had in regard to Sister Laina Hung's baptism, several of which repeated the phrase, "the door is open." God is truly in the details of our lives.

We concluded our final meeting by choosing our camp theme song, *The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning* and I, for one, can truly say that it is. May God bless us all as we **seek the Lord**.

Need Some Ideas?

By Richard Scaglione, Sr.

Editor's Note: As I read the Penn Mid-Atlantic Area Historian's Report, I thought it contained some ideas that would be great for any of our areas, so I chose to share a major portion of it with you. Enjoy! Feel free to share your area's activities with the GMBA Editor, too, so that other areas can benefit from your hard work.—Sister Karen Progar, GMBA Editor

The Penn Mid-Atlantic Area MBA held its Activities' Committee Meeting for 2003 in McKees Rocks on February 22nd. Reports were given and a variety of activities for the remainder of the year were scheduled. This meeting was followed with our "Wing Cook Off" Fundraiser. Each

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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

The angel Gabriel, a messenger from God, came to a woman named Mary in the city of Nazareth to tell her that she would conceive a son and would call His name Jesus. Gabriel goes on to say:

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

Mary, however, was a virgin, and so she answered back, *"Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:34-35).*

In order to prove that Jesus was the Son of God, and not the son of Joseph, who Mary was espoused to, He needed to be born in a way that was impossible in the minds of mankind. No one had ever been born (or ever will be born) to a woman who is a virgin. When mankind cannot explain something with logic or scientific evidence, then it is something divine; something that is done by a higher power, who is not restricted by the laws of nature, science, or technology. Remember, if something happens in life that can be explained by some kind of scientific evidence, then it can be debated whether or not it was an act of God. In the case of the birth of Jesus, no one can explain, nor has anyone attempted to explain how a virgin can give birth. People who do not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ simply say it didn't really happen this way, and that Mary was in fact, not a virgin.

Christmas is the time of year when people everywhere celebrate this remarkable event; however, I would guess that a majority of people really don't understand that this incredible story is what they are celebrating. In the Church today, we should not be surprised when we see impossible things happen, because one of the greatest events in history (the birth of Jesus) is something the world would say is impossible, but we know it is true. Just a few verses later, the angel Gabriel proclaims: *"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).*

What a powerful statement that is! NOTHING shall be impossible with God. That means there is absolutely no limitation to what He can do. We sing a song in *The Songs of Zion* that says, *"There's not anything that Jesus cannot do."* Truly, He can do all things. Often times we say this, we testify of this, we sing about this, but then when confronted with something that seems impossible to overcome, we talk about our limitations? A good example is when we become afflicted. Suddenly we focus on what the doctors tell us and not what God can do. Discouragement is something that comes about when we believe that God cannot change our situation. God can do all things! There isn't anything He cannot do!

In fact, when seemingly impossible situations arise in our lives, it is God's chance to prove Himself. God loves to do this! He is not a hidden or mysterious God, He is a living God whose arms are outstretched to all of humankind all day, every day! Anytime we witness something happen that seems impossible in the eyes of the world, it is a direct result of God's involvement. This is why when we testify of Him, we testify of the impossible things He has made possible in our lives. He used a young boy to translate an entire record of a tribe of Israel, which we have today as The Book of Mormon! He uses the weak and unassuming to do great things to prove it is HIM who is working this work, and not because of our own abilities, or some scientific reason.

This Christmas, let's teach our families and friends that we celebrate the ability of our God to do ALL THINGS. Through Him, we too can do ALL THINGS. That's the best Christmas gift anyone can receive. May God bless you all with a Merry Christmas.

The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Bork



When Problems Come Back, Do As David Did

Dear Friends,

Sometimes when big problems have come into my life, I think about David in the Bible. He made many mistakes, but is still described as a favorite person of God, a "man after God's own heart." That means David's ways pleased God. "What did David do?" I ask myself. "How did David handle problems that come back?"

When David was growing up, his country was constantly under attack by the Philistine Nation that was beside them. They sent armies led by fierce giant warriors to attack. David was just a boy when he faced the problem of fighting the giant Goliath. His older brothers made fun of him, scolded him for acting important and told him to go home. They did not help him. King Saul gave him a heavy suit of armor that he could not use. King Saul was not any help to David in solving the problem.

David called on God to help him. He called on his faith by telling King Saul about the times that God had saved him from other things, like a wild lion and a bear. He loved God and knew God could preserve his life and save him. David took smooth stones from the riverbed, placed them in his slingshot and ran up to Goliath and struck him dead. The army of the Philistine enemies turned and ran away. David was a hero to the army of his people.

Several years passed. David

became a soldier and leader. King Saul became jealous of David and wanted to kill him. But David loved the king and forgave him while he and a small army of followers hid or left the country to work as warriors for other kings. David also loved his country. The Philistines kept hiring relatives of the giant, Goliath, to attack Israel. Time after time, when the Philistines would come against Israel, David and his men would fight for freedom.

Since there were no guns, bombs, cars, or airplanes in those days, men fought hand to hand. Goliath was dead, but he had a giant brother named Lamhi, who bragged that he would kill David. The family of Goliath also had four fierce warrior sons, all alive and still wanting to kill David and enslave his people. David was willing to face these huge problems himself. But this time, God sent David's soldiers to help solve the problem and fight the giant warriors. David's nephew, the son of his brother Shimea, went to war. He killed a giant son of Goliath who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. Another soldier killed one of the giant's sons and the giant, Lamhi.

Then Goliath's other son, Saph, came to kill David. When David planned to go face the problem as before and fight, his men and friends refused to let him go. This time, they said, "You can not go out with us to battle anymore. You are the light, [and leader] of Israel. We cannot run the risk of having you be killed." So this time, David shared his problem and let others help him.

In our lives, God helps us constantly. He has healed us and com-

forted us and saved us many many times since we first knew Him. He has solved problems and made our way easier thousands of times, and we may not even have known it. Just like He saved David from the bear and the wolf when he was a shepherd, He has protected you. David remembered God's care when it came time to face the problem of Goliath alone. He sang songs thanking God for His care. You also must remember God's goodness to you when you are alone.

When David's original problem came back in the form of Goliath's brother and his four fighting sons, God solved the problem in another way. This time He sent David's men to fight and kill the enemy. Just like some-

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WORD SEARCH

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Our Women Today

General Ladies' Uplift Circle Business Meeting

By Sister Terri Bravo

On October 10, 2003 the General Ladies' Uplift Circle held its business meeting in the Greensburg Chapel at the World Conference Center in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Our meeting opened with the hymn, *I Know Whom I Have Believed*. Sister Sally Curtain of the Maine branch offered prayer. The choice of hymn was key because the theme for the conference weekend seemed to be that we must know the Lord. The theme was confirmed when our Vice President, Sister Lorraine DeMercurio, spoke from I Samuel 3:10, with the account of the young child, Samuel, first hearing the voice of the Lord. (Later that evening in the GMBA sponsored meeting, Brother Steven Osaka of Kenya encouraged us to know the Lord at a higher level, so that in times of trouble we will have the confidence that when we call on Him, He will answer.)

Sister Arline Whitton, our Presi-

dent, led the meeting that included officers' reports, Area Presidents' reports, and discussion of both unfinished and new business. It should be noted that from its humble beginnings in 1920 to the present day, the Ladies' Uplift Circle is an organization that was inspired by God for sisters to learn the word of God and support the missionary efforts of The Church of Jesus Christ. As we listened to the reports, we knew that we're part of an organization that has supported the work of God for the past eighty-three years.

Sister Betty Lowe reported on the fellowship weekend to be held in Tampa, Florida, on June 24-27, 2004. The meeting will be held in the Marriott Hotel at the Tampa Bay International Airport. The theme will be "Safe, Secure and Saved in the Arms of Jesus." All sisters are encouraged to attend. Registration forms can be obtained in the local circles.

The conference brought a change in our leadership. Sister Karen Progar was elected as our General Circle President and Sister Becky Tarbuck was elected secretary. We all stood in acknowledgement to the dedication and the service of Sister Arline Whitton and Sister Joyce Ross.

During our afternoon session, we received reports on the missionary work that we have supported in the

past six months. Brother Donald Ross reported on the missionary work in Venezuela. We were grateful to have supported this work with approximately \$7000 raised by our circles to be used toward the purchase of the missionary van. Brother Joe Perri gave us a report on the efforts of our Nigerian circle sisters to teach on such subjects as hygiene, childbirth, and marriage. The conference voted to give a donation for the sisters' travel expenses. Lastly, Brother Stacey Light gave an explanation of the use of our contribution to the building of the mission in Durango, Mexico. The building is completed! We decided to make our Special Project contributions towards the building needs for our missions in Mexico.

Each one of us has our own individual experience of hearing the voice of the Lord in our lives. What we do with the calling is our own choice and responsibility. The Ladies' Uplift Circle is a very beneficial organization to join. Many of us have learned how to read and search the scriptures under the loving eyes of the sisters of The Church of Jesus Christ. We have grown spiritually and have learned how to organize projects and become a useful member in our missions and branches. Take the time to attend and become a part of your local Ladies' Circle. You will be in for a lifetime of blessings.



Branch and Mission News

A Testimony

Related by Sister Rose Scaglione

One day my mother, Sister Filomena Rullo, became very sick and her condition continued to worsen; she eventually became bedfast. Although she was anointed a few times, she did not improve. The doctor visited her and gave her some medicine, but this did not help. Mom hardly talked or

moved around. One morning I had a dentist appointment at 10:00. I went into Mom's room to let her know I was leaving. Alone in her bed, she began to pray and told God, "I am leaving myself in your hands." When I returned from the dentist two hours later, I looked in and saw that Mom was asleep. A short time later, Mom awoke and called me. She then related a most wonderful experience that occurred while I was gone.

After I had left the house, a young man came into her room. He seemed to be a doctor, and he carried a satchel in his hand. He came to her bed and asked, "Are you the one who is sick?" Mom replied, "Yes, I've

been sick for a long time." He said, "I know. That is why I am here." Mom thought I called the doctor to visit her. The young man sat on the edge of Mom's bed, looked over, and said, "I see you are very sick. I will have to operate on you." She said to him, "I am so afraid to have another operation, as I have had three operations already for other problems." "Well I will have to try another way." He took off his jacket and rolled one of the sleeves of his white shirt up above the elbow. He told her to open her mouth as wide as she could. As Mom did this, he cupped his hand with his fingers close

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A Testimony

Continued from Page 7

together and pointing down. He then put his hand into her mouth and slowly, but gently, continued down into her throat. Mom said she felt as if she were smothering and would die. She thought she would not see any of us again. She soon felt his fingers scraping all around the inside of her stomach. As the pain became unbearable, she passed out. She did not hear me come home from the dentist.

When Mom woke up, she felt she was in a hospital room and that she had had surgery. As she looked around the room, she recognized she was in her own bed at home. She recalled the young man who had come to her, and asked me if I had called the doctor. I told her I did not call her doctor. Mom now felt so good she got out of bed, dropped to her knees, and thanked God for sending this miracle to her. She felt it was Christ, the Great Physician, who performed this operation which immediately healed her.

Mom got up from her praying and got dressed. She told me she was going to visit Sister Schultz, a sister from our branch. She explained to her the experience she had that morning, and how good she now felt. Sister Schultz told her it was a messenger from God who came to her that morning.

Years later Mom was hospitalized again. X-rays were taken which puzzled the doctors. They noticed scar tissue in Mom's heart, lungs, and stomach areas. I still have those X-rays, and remember the looks on the doctors' faces because they could find no explanation.

Mom visited and brought many people to the Gospel by giving her testimony.

Atlanta, Georgia Outreach

The Atlanta, Georgia Branch continued its West Cobb County outreach efforts in July and August, culminating in a Labor Day weekend

picnic and singspiration. Thankfully, many visitors came and experienced the beauty and spirit of the Restored Gospel.

Between July 20th and August 30th over 375 flyers were distributed, an advertisement in a local newsletter went to 2500 homes in the Powder Springs area, and over 40 personal invitations were sent out. As well, numerous face-to-face personal invitations were made and conversations were started with the many inquisitive neighbors who stopped by the Outreach Center. The peak of the canvassing was the distribution of flyers by eight young people Saturday, August 30th in eight surrounding communities. The flyers contained both an invitation to the outreach center and a brief synopsis of The Church of Jesus Christ.

The branch hosted a community picnic on Saturday, starting at 4:00 p.m., with plenty of food brought by both saints and visitors and hot dogs and hamburgers grilled on site. Activities included volleyball, horseshoes, and children's games, concluding with singing around the piano. We were greatly encouraged by the attendance of about forty visitors, including neighbors, contractors, laborers and their families, and even some from a local church.

Prior to the picnic, one visitor stopped by early in the morning to inquire about the Church. Several songs that were played and sung for her touched her deeply and she promised to return Sunday evening. During the picnic, one neighbor from down the street came and requested our ministry to go to her home to counsel her grandson who was addicted to drugs. Two of our Elders went with her and spent an hour counseling the young man and offering prayer for him that God would break his addiction and allow him to be reunited with his wife and children. Thankfully, by the following Wednesday evening, he was with his wife and children and he thanked the brothers for their prayers. He also promised a personal visit to the Church. Praise God!

On Sunday morning, 20 members,

including four from Kentucky, three from Tampa, two from Mid-Georgia, two from Forest Hills, one from California, and one from Michigan, attended services. Total attendance was over 30 for the outreach meeting. More importantly, we had two young people visiting our services for the first time. Brother Doug Obradovich opened the service by using 2nd Nephi 27:26 and spoke about God's marvelous work and wonder in our lives. At the same time, the branch held its regular services in Fayetteville. When Brother Ron Morle spoke about the visitation to the young man on drugs, a sister saw a light glow around him.

The entire branch reconvened Sunday evening at the outreach center for the community singspiration. There were seven new visitors attending and total attendance was about 37. Two of the visitors performed special songs for us, besides performances by our own talent. The Saturday morning visitor returned for the singspiration. We learned she is from the nation of Liberia. One of the other visitors returned Wednesday evening for our MBA.

We praise God for all of those who worked so hard to invite and prepare for the outreach and we praise God for the large number of visitors who came and felt the Spirit of God and the love of the saints.

Ordination in Detroit, Michigan Branch #2

By Sister Darlene Lovalvo

Being called into The Church of Jesus Christ is truly a blessing. As saints of this perfect plan, we rely on God's Holy Spirit to call men and women into various offices to ensure that the Gospel moves forward. On April 6, 2003, Brother Jim Bork, from Detroit, Michigan Branch #2, was one of these "chosen" men to fulfill the office of Deacon.

The meeting began with a group of sisters singing, *Blessed Assurance*. Apostle Peter Scolaro, who was

visiting along with many other brothers and sisters from the Region, opened the meeting. He focused on that blessed assurance that can only be given by the Lord. But how do we maintain that consistency and confidence in the assurance that God promises us? It is up to us! God will do His part. By reading from the 1st Psalm, Brother Peter reminded us that we can have that blessed assurance if we are like that tree, planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth fruit... not to be moved! That confidence also comes from relying on each other, remembering each other in prayer, and most importantly, having faith unto repentance to believe in the salvation that comes from Christ. This is the only assurance that is solid and sure. Thus, the reward is God's protection.

Apostle Paul Palmieri Sr. followed by reminding us that we should have confidence that God will be with us unto the end of the world.

The afternoon meeting began with Brother Sam DiFalco's testimony. He told of the time when he visited the home of Brother Jim and his parents many years ago. The spirit filled their house as the Lord assured them that this is the true Church. Brother Sam also shared the many blessings he received when he held the office of Deacon.

Brother Almo Straccia offered a beautiful prayer as he washed Brother Jim's feet in preparation to receive this ordination. As the ministry circled around Brother Jim, Brother Leonard A. Lovalvo offered a powerful prayer asking the Lord to select the elder to confirm this office upon him—Brother Alex Gentile was that elder. We are so blessed as a people to be a part of this perfect order established by the Lord.

With humility, Brother Jim Bork shared his testimony. He gave God all the praise, honor and glory. He expressed how he loves to serve the Lord and how it will be an honor to serve His people. He loves this Church, the Lord and all the saints.

The Lord showered down His blessings on this glorious day. Once again, He gave us that blessed assurance that He is ready to pour His spirit out on His people. Let us pray continu-

ously to gain more confidence in that holy assurance so that He will continue to use each and every one of us.

Are We Laboring for Zion?

By Sister Cindy Bright

I will let you answer that question. I want to share with you a blessed opportunity I had along with Sister Rose Bonaduce, Sister Suzette Huttenberger, Sister Linda Scolaro, and Sister April Calabro. I was asked to teach the children during our Atlantic Coast Regional Conference this past September. These mothers volunteered as well and I thank them for helping.

I asked the children, "Have you ever heard this word Zion before and what does it mean?" Let me tell you these children are listening.

The Lord blest me with the scripture found in III Nephi 1st chapter, how the people were looking forward to Christ's birth and this is a type and shadow of how we are looking for Zion.

As I was teaching of the signs that would take place to show God did fulfill His promise, several of the young boys stopped me. They said "No Sister Cindy, that's not right. The signs were there were earthquakes and darkness." I stopped with amazement because they remembered such great details and they were listening. This was a true blessing to me. Of course, I helped them to understand these were the signs at Christ's Resurrection, but I thanked them for listening and remembering what they were taught in their branches. We went on to say how we too need to be of good cheer just as the Lord blest Nephi. Hold up our heads for Zion is coming one day, and if we doubt then we are not able to shine the light of God. We also discussed how we need to have faith and believe because God keeps His promises. We ended our lesson with a special snack, Milk and Honey Milkshakes, that were promised to them after our lesson. I thank God for how He is blessing our children with this

knowledge they have of the scriptures.

So I ask you, "ARE WE LABORING FOR ZION?" Ask the children in your branches and missions, they can answer this question.

Let us be zealous like Moroni (Alma 46:12-13), that we might be found ready to LABOR FOR ZION.

Note of Thanks

Brother Russell and Sister Ethel Cadman wish to thank all the brothers, sisters and friends who sent best wishes to Brother Russell recently. Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated. May God continue to bless each one of you.

* * * * *

This letter is written to our brothers and sisters of The Church of Jesus Christ and to our many friends.

We wish to thank you so very much for the love that was poured out on our family during the long illness and eventual death of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and apostle in The Church of Jesus Christ, Robert A. Watson.

He loved The Church of Jesus Christ. Even in his physical condition in the months before he died, when praying, he would always end his prayer by asking God to bless the beautiful Church of Jesus Christ. I believe that those of us that were there around his bed in the last moments witnessed a miracle. My daughter, Judy, her husband, Rick, and I kept telling him that the rest of the family was coming to see him. He would occasionally open his eyes to look at us, his breathing was very labored. A few minutes before midnight, the rest of our children walked into the room and saw their father in his last breathing moments. Larry immediately got on his knees and began to pray. As he was praying, my husband's eyes that had

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Note of Thanks

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been closed most of the day opened wide, looked at all our children; Elaine and Dwayne, Larry and Vanessa, Judy and Rick and I, then looked up to heaven and with a look of amazement, he breathed his last breath. We all felt that he saw the Lord and all angels coming to take him home. How beautiful is the death of a saint.

We, the Watson family, can never thank you enough for the many cards, prayers and gifts of love you sent to us. Your love has sustained us through our pain and grief.

I am very lonely without him. Bob is gone from our sight, but will always be with me and with the family that he loved so much. We miss his wisdom, his caring counsel. I miss the twinkle in his eyes when he was about to be funny. I miss his laughter and his kind loving spirit.

He was a wonderful father to our children; he was always there for them. He loved our grandchildren and doted on our great-grandchildren. He was a spiritual father and counselor to many and to me he was the most loving, caring husband who could make the sun shine on a gloomy day. He was my best friend. As you read this, offer a little prayer for me for God's strength; for the rest of my journey will be very lonely. However, God has promised to be there for me and I am hanging on to His promises. The promises of God are sure. Jesus never fails and He will not fail me now.

May God bless all of you. We love you very much.

Sister Sarah Watson and the Family of Apostle Robert A. Watson

Postscript: We would especially invite your prayers on our mother's behalf. She recently slipped and fell and suffered a severe and total fracture of her arm just below the shoulder. She is in a great deal of pain, and the doctors at present are still considering what option would be best for her to promote the healing of the injury.

Reminder

Church literature makes wonderful Christmas gifts. To order literature or a gift certificate, contact the Print House at:

734-429-5080

Email CofJCPH@msn.com.

A Key for Italy

Continued from Page 1

that the Church in Italy has the authority of God, the true Word of God, and the keys to the Kingdom of God. These dreams also reinforce the fact that Brother Giovanni is important in keeping the Church alive in San Demetrio.

As Brother John and I began our visit, it was not long until we sensed the change that had come upon our brother and sister. As we met together on Sunday morning in their small kitchen area, where our sister had already set the table with the Lord's Supper, we sat around that sacred setting and began to sing hymns to the honor and glory of God. Then just as we started to read and talk about the Word of God, Sister Filomena interrupted. A voice had spoken to her and said to the effect, "They [our brother and sister] have the key for San Demetrio, and they must use the key – or it will be taken away from them." This was once again the Lord's confirmation that our brother and sister are needed now in Italy. As we spoke and discussed this, the Spirit of God bore witness to the need of having the Restored Gospel in the land of Italy. There is still a great work that the Lord has in that land. Also, the Spirit bore witness that Italy would be a necessary stepping stone for the Gospel to go to other parts of Europe.

The "key" message has been given numerous times and has many meanings. Brother Marino (as an Elder) has the keys to the Kingdom of God. The Marinos have a key role to the Church and the plan of God in San Demetrio. The saints in Italy will be a key to the eventual spreading of the

Restored Gospel in other areas of Europe.

Brother and Sister Marino are committed to moving back to San Demetrio by mid-December. They leave a very difficult family situation in Frankfurt but have no doubt God is telling them to go. They are very concerned for the children and grandchildren they must leave behind, and this is adversely affecting Brother Giovanni's health. Additionally, Brother Giovanni's mother has been in poor health, which just compounds the worries. However, the assurance of God is with them. We promised as we departed that we would remember them often in our prayers and that we would request the Church in America to do the same. Please, when it is well with you, say a prayer for Brother Giovanni and Sister Filomena, the Marino family, and the Church in Italy. This need for prayer is another "key" for all of us.

Sermons from the Scriptures

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but of God.

3:1 What advantage then hath the saint? Or what profit is there in baptism? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles (very words) of God.

It is not my intent to change the scripture, but through thoughtful analysis to apply them to my daily life. We can be better saints if we consciously seek after the deeper meanings of the scriptures and let them be a sermon to us every day.

Need Some ideas?

Continued from Page 4

local in attendance brought a large supply of the tasty morsels in specially prepared sauces. A hungry assembly quickly devoured these culinary delights. Each individual then voted for the Local whose wings were considered the most delicious. The

final tally of votes showed that the McKees Rocks Local provided the most succulent wings; however, the most important outcome was the \$550.00 raised for our Area Treasury. The fun and fellowship overshadowed the sauce splattered faces and fierce competition during the event.

A second fundraiser in which we sold candy bars for \$1.00 each, netting a 50% profit was also planned and carried out by Sister Robin Burns. The Area membership did a wonderful job increasing funds which the Area is able to donate or use for next year's activities.

On Saturday, March 29th we met in Aliquippa for a motivating seminar. The afternoon began with a covered dish dinner, after which Brother Joe Alverson from Spartanburg led the seminar, "Jesus in the Midst of All." It was brought out that Jesus must be the focal point in every aspect of our lives. Sister Leah Nath prepared activities for the younger children, and Brother Jason Monaghan taught the teenagers.

Our annual Mini Camp was held on Friday, June 13th at the World Conference Center grounds. A variety of tents and a couple of vans provided sleeping quarters for those who were brave enough to endure the outdoors. The Area officers conducted an outdoor meeting. A good turnout enjoyed a brief message from the scriptures and a season of singing and testimonies. Fellowship continued around the bonfire and lasted into the late hours of the night.

Our Area Youth Director, Sister Leah Nath and her Assistant, Sister Lisa Gray continue to send enjoyable, colorful newsletters to the Area's children.

Many young people, as well as some older ones, support the Pennsylvania Youth Summit, a joint program with the Penn Mid-Atlantic Region. We visit branches and missions to support and encourage them.

Brother Richard Scaglione, Sr. showed his Colombian slide presentation to locals in Monongahela, Glassport and Imperial. He also traveled with a slide presentation on the history of the Church. The Imperial and Aliquippa Locals joined with McKees

Rocks in McKees Rock on September 3rd to view the presentation. Materials were given to these locals to further the subjects in their respective MBA classes.

The "Back to School" seminar was held in Monongahela on Saturday, August 2nd. The young people were instructed to "Know Your Church" so they would be better equipped to tell others of who we are and what we believe.

Our Area Campout was held at Antiochian Village on Friday, September 12th to Sunday, September 14th. As usual, a super crowd enjoyed the theme, "Fill My Cup." Other Areas were well represented as everyone had their spiritual cups filled by seminars, preaching, singing, testimonies and fellowship. Friday evening many celebrities visited us to conduct a special Restoration (Hollywood) Squares game night. We will always remember, Elvis, Bo Peep, Mama, Frankenstein, Richard Nixon, Bert and Ernie, Sister - Sister, Sponge Bob Square Pants and Drew Carey's colorful assistant, Mimi. It was amazing how much they knew about our Church and the Restoration. Sisters Laverne (Karen Progar) and Shirley (JoAnn Niehl) served as the committee and moderators for the game.

Sister Kristy Rogalla did a super job as Camp Director. On Saturday evening, an auction of a variety of beautiful, useful, surprising, and often, unexpected merchandise brought \$2,374.00 to our Area Treasury. Our bell hop luggage service netted \$225.00

did David. God can send you people to help you with your problems just as He did for David. Pray to Him and talk to Him. Sing songs of praise to the Lord. He has helped you solve your problems and fight your battles. He will help you again. God cares for you.

Sister Jan

Children Blessed

Armand James Giovannone, son of Brother Ron and Sister Cindy Giovannone, was blessed on October 5th, 2003 in the Liberty Branch, Warren, Ohio.

Wyatt Arthur Nicklow, son of Marnie and Daniel Nicklow was blessed on October 19th, 2003 in the Monongahela, Pennsylvania Branch.

Ally Ramey, daughter of Sister Theresa and Lionel Ramey was blessed on October 26th, 2003 in the Freehold, New Jersey Branch.

Jackson Thomas Hunt, son of Brother Brandon and Courtney (Marnicio) Hunt was blessed on October 26th, 2003 in the Lorain, Ohio Branch.

Riley Payne Matthew, son of Brother James and Sister Patricia Matthew, was blessed on September 7th, 2003 at the Windsor, Ontario Branch.

Adria Christina Lobzun, daughter of Brother Gregory and Rosalea Lobzun, was blessed on July 27th, 2003 at the Windsor, Ontario Branch.

Macklyn Raven Beauchesne, daughter of Daniel and Wendy Beauchesne, was blessed on July 27th, 2003 at the Windsor, Ontario branch.

Kenny Ortega, son of Jorge and Ordalis Velasquez, was blessed on October 19th, 2003 at the Inner City Branch.

The Children's Corner

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times, especially when a problem keeps coming back, we need help too. We need the help of others to teach us, to direct us and give us encouragement to keep fighting our problems. There are many times when we cannot fight our problems alone, and we need to have the ministers of The Church of Jesus Christ lay hands on us and pray for us.

God can make you strong as He

* **WEDDINGS** *

Sister Christina Benyola and Brother Justin Paxton were united in holy matrimony in Bell, California in July, 2003.

Births

Jason Cardinale, son of Brother Anthony and Sister Jeanette Cardinale was born on August 31, 2003.

Ordinations

Brother Ryan McDonnel was ordained a Deacon in the Bell, California Branch on November 10, 2003. His feet were washed by Brother Robby McDonnel and he was ordained by Brother Bob McDonnel.

Baptisms and Reinstatements

Sister Wilhelmenia Watts was baptized on October 5th, 2003 in the Freehold, New Jersey Branch. She was baptized by Brother Willie Brown and confirmed by Brother Jim Crudup.

Sister Theresa Ramey was baptized on October 26th, 2003 in the Freehold, New Jersey Branch. She was baptized by Brother Carl Huttenberger Jr. and confirmed by Brother Joseph Perri.

Sister Colleen Schlift was baptized on November 2nd, 2003 in the Freehold, New Jersey Branch. She was baptized by Brother Willie Brown and confirmed by Brother Carl Huttenberger, Jr.

Sister Gloria Rau was baptized on September 28, 2003 at Detroit, Michigan Branch #1. She was baptized by Brother Frank Natoli and confirmed by Brother Louis Vitto.

Brother Edgar Barlan was baptized on September 14, 2003 at Detroit, Michigan Branch #1. He was baptized by Brother Larry Champine and confirmed by Apostle Peter Scolaro.

Brother Robert Bashaw was baptized on August 17th, 2003 at Detroit, Michigan Branch #1. He was baptized by Brother Jerry Benyola and confirmed by Brother Louis Pietrangelo.

Sister Martha Bashaw was baptized on August 17th, 2003 at Detroit, Michigan Branch #1. She was baptized by Brother Mike LaSala and confirmed by Brother Sam DiFalco.

Brother Ric Romanski was baptized on July 27th, 2003 at Detroit, Michigan Branch #1. He was baptized by Brother Louis Vitto and confirmed by Brother Mike LaSala.

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to those that mourn the loss of loved ones. May God bless and comfort you.

STELLA (GIANNETTI) SHARETZ

Sister Stella (Giannetti) Sharetz of the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania Branch passed on to her reward on October 12, 2003. She was preceded in death by her husband and is survived by her brothers, Pete, John and Benny; and sisters, Betty Jean and Sandra, as well as numerous nephews and nieces.

DENNIS BRUNO

Brother Dennis Bruno of the Redford, Michigan Mission, passed on to his reward on August 15, 2003. He is preceded in death by his mother, Sister Louise Bruno and grandmother, Sister Mary Spink. He is survived by his father, Brother Ken Bruno; wife, Mary Kay Bruno; son and daughter-in-law, Kenneth and Chantel Bruno; son, Michael Angelo Bruno; step-daughters, Lauren and Lindsey; grandchildren, Dominic and Isabella; and his brother, Ronald.

Address Change

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____