

# The Gospel News

The Church of Jesus Christ, Monongahela, Pa., USA.

January, 1992

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## Maine Mission Dedication

*By Cindy Onorato*

A beautiful, long awaited day, well spent, in honor and glorification to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

On July 21, 1991, in Brunswick, Maine, our hearts rejoiced in welcoming to our Dedication many brothers, sisters, family, and friends from near and far to our newly-renovated church building, built in the year 1799.

Sixteen elders were present. Also visiting was a busload from New Jersey. We were grateful for all those who came and shared in our joy and blessings.

We gathered in singing hymns. Brother Dominick Rose addressed our meeting and remarked on the transformation that has taken place from the first time he saw the building until now.

Brother Richard Onorato Jr., Maine Mission Presiding Elder, then welcomed everyone. He gave the following brief history of the Maine Mission:

### BRIEF HISTORY

Approximately 25 years ago my grandparents, Brother John and Sister Elizabeth Onorato and children moved to North Edgecomb, Maine from Brooklyn, New York.

They longed for fellowship and

fasted and prayed that the Lord would send someone to teach the word of God to them. The Lord heard their prayers and sent Brother Frank Zaher, Brooklyn Branch elder, to come up regularly. Brother Frank labored very hard for the spiritual welfare of the brothers and sisters in Maine. This was the start of the mission.

They gathered in Brother John and Sister Elizabeth's garage, converted into a little church, for many years.

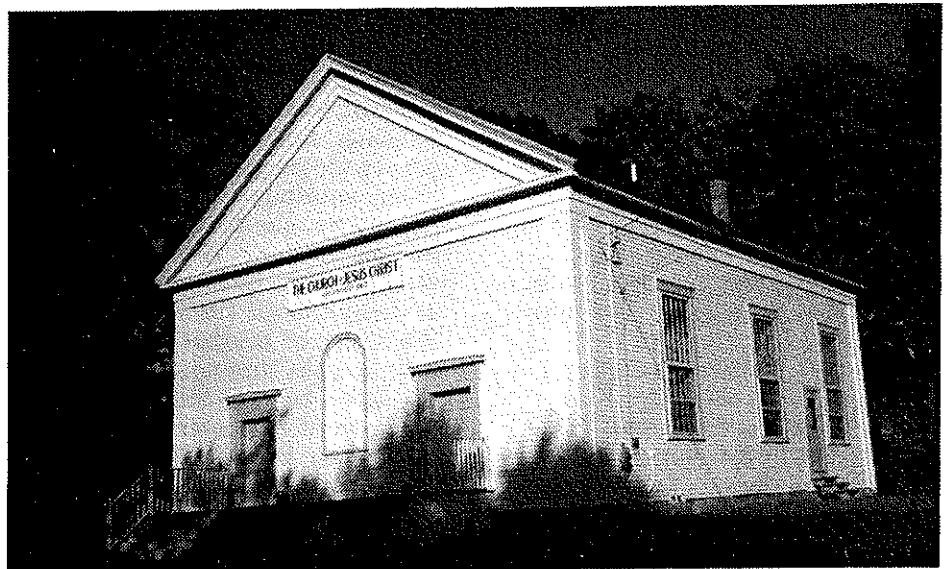
In that period of time, the Lord called Brother Richard Onorato Sr. into the ministry. He also called teachers, deacons, and deaconesses.

The mission began to grow with many blessings, experiences, gift of tongues, and baptisms. There was no doubt, the Lord was performing a work here in Maine.

After the death of our dearly beloved Sister Elizabeth Onorato in 1981, we moved on to meeting in Brother Richard Sr. and Sister Mary Onorato's home.

Brother Richard Onorato Jr. was then called into the ministry.

**(Continued on Page 2)**



Maine Mission, newly renovated, was built in 1799.

## DEDICATION continued . . .

We gathered for meetings in their home for eight years. We began to pray earnestly to the Lord for a building to meet in, not just for comfort, but a place where we could put the title: "The Church of Jesus Christ."

The Lord heard our prayers and he directed us to an old church building in Brunswick, Maine. It needed total renovation.

At the time, it looked as if it were an impossible task for thirteen members to undertake a work so great. But, we soon learned, there is nothing impossible with God. He directed us one step at a time. He gave us the know-how for each task, direction, help, support, confidence, strength to labor, and even funding made possible from the General Church. Five years of laboring went into the building.

Brother Richard Jr. related one of the many experiences had while working at the building:

One day my husband, Brother Richard Jr., and I were trying to put up an A-Frame of the wall. We had to raise it up above the existing wall frame that was standing. As Brother Richard got on one end and I on the other, we began to lift, while standing on a ladder. As we lifted the wall, which was very heavy and awkward, it began to fall forward. We immediately turned to the Lord in prayer, and as we did, Bro. Richard saw the hand of the Lord push the wall back and he was able to secure it. We thanked and praised the Lord, for He was always there.

Many more wonderful experiences were had. While we also had many setbacks and discouragements, the end result was worth it all. It was as if the Lord were saying, "Do you really want a church building? You must work for it!"

Brother Richard then gave thanks, with all sincerity of his heart, to all who have contributed to the work of the church building. Everyone in the mission took part, as well as other brothers and sisters, family, and friends.

Acknowledgements were given to Brother Dominick and Sister

Belle Rose for all of their support and for always being there for us, and to Brother Sam Dell, who came with other brothers and sisters to give us a physical and spiritual boost. He thanked the General Church Trustees for their support and financial aid, the children of the mission who worked hard, his wife, and most of all, thanks and honor were given to God.

A prayer of dedication was offered by Brother Paul Benyola, Apostle to the Atlantic Coast District.

The Atlantic Coast Area MBA President spoke on behalf of all MBA members and rejoiced in being able to bring a whole busload to share in our dedication.

The MBA then sang, *Sing Hallelujah!*

Brother Dominic Thomas, General Church President, stated, "There has already been a dedication exhibited here." By his looking and listening, he sensed that we had a deep trust in God, a deep dependency on each other. He then requested that everyone stand in appreciation to the Maine Mission. He stated how the Lord wants us to build in Brunswick, Maine, and how we should put our lives into the Church, how we should love our mission (The Maine Mission should be the Main Mission to us!), maintain our focus, and not hold anything back from the Church. Peter said, "It's My Church." This day is historic! Now that the building is prepared to gather in, we should focus on the spiritual structure. Dedication has to be done day in and day out. He asked us to think of what will take place in our building: singing hymns, fast and prayer meetings, ordinations, baptisms, weddings, "What sustains our hearts, our souls, our minds and our bodies." There is no rest for those who embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ! He also spoke of the desire of Brother Sam Dell, how he goes throughout the Church and helps build buildings.

A word of prayer was offered by Brother Dominic Thomas.

We sang hymn #41 in the MBA songbook. Brother Paul Benyola spoke, commenting on how we once met in Brother Richard Sr.'s dining room for church and now we have

this beautiful building.

Brothers Dick Lawson and Joseph Ross, General Church Trustees, stressed maintaining our focus and our enthusiasm. Remember our beginnings. Our building has been transformed into a place where the Spirit of God dwells.

The trustees then presented the mission with an American flag as a gift. Before the meeting a lovely clock was also presented to the mission by the Brooklyn Branch.

Brother Len Benyola, Atlantic Coast District President, spoke, giving thanks that he was able to take part in our dedication.

During the course of the meeting, Sister Mary Onorato had an experience. A hymn, *Rose of Sharon*, was called earlier from the MBA songbook, with the words, "The rose was transported to heaven," in it. This made her think of Sister Elizabeth Onorato. This verse was in an experience that was had about Sister Elizabeth when she passed away, that "she was transported to heaven." Sister Mary desired greatly, how wonderful it would be if Sister Elizabeth could see the mission now and be here among us. Sister Mary then felt her presence strongly, and saw her face smiling down among us.

Brother Richard Onorato Sr. spoke briefly on how Sister Elizabeth, his mother, through her example, was the reason he was here today. He related how he came back to church and how the Lord has blessed us tremendously.

We continued with Communion, passed by Brothers Jim Link, Sam Dell, and Richard Onorato Sr. and Jr.

Brother Dominick Rose noted how our brothers and sisters came from Dedham, Massachusetts to be with us. Please remember them in your prayers as they strive to serve the Lord. We were dismissed in prayer.

A luncheon was served after the meeting, prepared by the Maine Mission Ladies' Uplift Circle.

We were sorry to see our beautiful meeting come to an end. We had to say good-bye to all our brothers, sisters, and friends.

We thank all of you for visiting, and for your prayers and support.

## A closer look at the Word of God

By David Majoros

As you read the Book of Mormon, have you ever wondered why some expressions or phrases seem to read so oddly or awkwardly? For example, why does it use phrases like "and it came to pass" and the words like "behold" so much? Or how about in I Nephi 1:3, where it says, "And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with my own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge." Why did Nephi (and so many other writers in the Book of Mormon) use the word "and" so much? And why couldn't Nephi have said something like this: "I know that what I have written is true because I did it myself; and I did it the best I knew how!"? A person could rightly ask, "Why does this book read like this?"

The answer to this honest question is that the Book of Mormon is an ancient *Hebrew* record engraved on metal plates, which means that it was written in the common way that the ancient Hebrews had of expressing themselves. In fact, modern biblical Hebrew language scholars call the unique expressions and phraseology they used "Hebraisms."

When God translated the Book of Mormon for us, He could have "edited" the text to make it easier for us to accept, but instead He translated it *literally*; that is, He dictated it to Joseph Smith just as if the ancient writers were writing for us today—Hebraisms and all!

In order to get a better understanding of this, let us imagine that archeologists in the years 3150 A.D. were digging around somewhere in the area that we call the United States today, and they found a piece of paper with a picture of a strange mammal-like creature, standing upright on two legs, munching a carrot, and saying, "What's up, Doc?" A 32nd Century translator may try to "help" the readers of his day by rendering that phrase, "What is in the sky, Physician?"

In doing this, is the translator really doing the text or the reader

justice by trying to make it "easier" to comprehend? Or should the translator be *true* to what is actually there and simply put into his own language "What's up, Doc?" and expect the reader or other scholars of his day to get busy, do some research, and find out just what that phrase meant in 20th century America?

Bringing this analogy to our day and time, we could call "What's up, Doc?" an Americanism. So are other phrases such as "time on my hands," "head over heels in love," and "Roaring Twenties." These phrases are commonly used in American society today. Virtually every American understands, without question, what these words mean. No one blinks an eye when one of these phrases is used. (Did you catch the Americanism in that last sentence?)

The Zarahemla Research Foundation, a non-profit corporation dedicated to Book of Mormon research, has provided us with some interesting information on three particular Hebraisms:

### "AND"

One prominent peculiarity of biblical Hebrew is the frequent use of the conjunction "and," both in beginning a sentence and in the listing of a series of objects or persons in a sentence. In A. B. Davidson's *An Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, the author states: "Hebrew syntax, though it has many subtleties of its own, is, broadly speaking, extremely simple, as a glance at any literal translation of the Old Testament, with its ever recurring "and" will show. The Hebrew habit to express thoughts is to coordinate clauses rather than to subordinate them, with one principal verb following another with a regularity that reminds one of the simple speech of children."

There seems to have been an attitude among ancient Hebrew writers of disliking the idea of beginning a sentence without "and." In the 22nd chapter of Genesis, "and" begins the verse in 21 of the 24 verses. Similar patterns are found throughout the Old Testament and throughout the Book of Mormon. In the 15th chapter of

Alma, "and" begins 15 of the 19 verses.

In Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar* the author states: "Contrary to English usage, which in lengthy enumerations uses the "and" to connect only the last member of the series, in Hebrew polysyndeton is customary." (i.e., "and" stands before each word or phrase in a series.)

A perfect example is found in Genesis 24:35: "And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses."

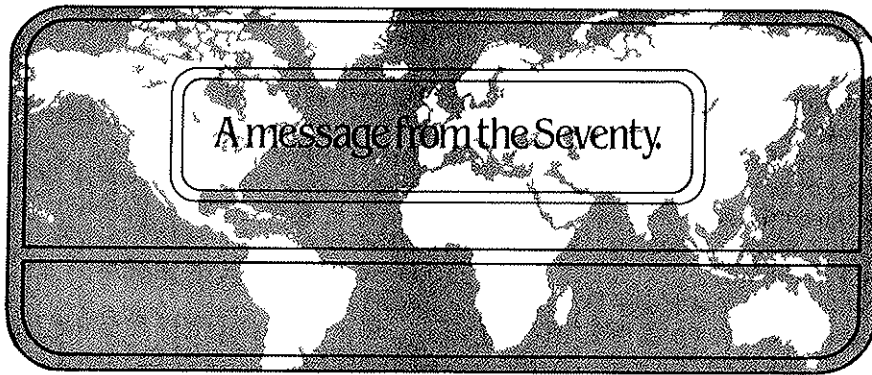
Notice the structure of Enos 1:21 from the Book of Mormon: "And it came to pass that the people of Nephi did till the land, and raise all manner of grain, and of fruit, and flocks of herds, and flocks of all manner of cattle of every kind, and goats, and wild goats, and also many horses."

### "AND IT CAME TO PASS"

"And it came to pass" is probably the most frequently used phrase in the Book of Mormon. This phrase in the idiom of King James English is a rendering of the Hebrew word "vayehee." Its frequent use in the Book of Mormon is consistent with the frequent use of "vayehee" in the Old Testament Hebrew text. In J. Weingreen's *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, the author comments concerning the meaning of this phrase: "This, rather than implying a continuation with what has preceded, has little more force (when translated) than 'now it happened.'" This phrase, "and it came to pass," and the frequent use of "and" are two of the most important proofs of Hebrew language structure found in the Book of Mormon.

Two reports of Mayan glyphs translated to read ". . . it came to pass . . ." have come to our attention. The first report is from the 1985 Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop at the University of Texas conducted by Linda Schele, a leading glyph expert. The workbook from

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## Southeast District Missionary Report

*By Eugene Perri, Chairman, Southeast DMOC*

*Following is a report by Evangelist Eugene Perri of the missionary activities being performed in the Southeast District in Florida.—Evangelist Editor*

### HOLLYWOOD RESERVATION

Although there are three other well-staffed churches servicing and subsidizing the Reservation, Brother Dennis Moraco reports that a cordial relationship has been cultivated with a social worker, allowing our Church to deliver food and clothing periodically.

Preparation was made for the Hollywood Branch to work together with Brother Bert Sheffler and a few other brothers from the Cape Coral Branch on a joint project with the Big Cypress Reservation. The brothers were involved in set-up and general manual labor, helping both the Hollywood and Big Cypress Reservations to get ready for a week-long tribal conference which was scheduled for early January.

### BIG CYPRESS

Brother Sheffler, along with several brothers from Cape Coral, is traveling to the Big Cypress Reservation twice a week. There are approximately 20 families who have opened their homes for our brothers to visit.

The death of Joseph Jumper, our original contact, was somewhat of a setback, but other friendships are being developed gradually. One Saturday a month is set aside for

helping with house painting, plumbing, and all types of home repair.

Preparations were also made here for the joint Tribal Conference at the aforementioned Hollywood Reservation.

Brother Bert stated that they are also visiting several Indian families in Imokolee, Florida.

### BRIGHTON

This endeavor has become a joint effort of the Fort Pierce and Lake Worth Branches. One of our brothers from Fort Pierce has taken a job on the Reservation with Dan Bowers, who is in charge of all construction on the South Florida Reservations. This has allowed for very close contact on a daily basis, and has encouraged some people from the Brighton Reservation to attend our Fort Pierce Branch more often than before. It has also given greater opportunity to present and discuss the Book of Mormon on the Reservation.

Brother John D'Orazio and a group from Lake Worth have gone occasionally for a Wednesday evening service and have been given the opportunity to speak. Brother Frank Rogolino reports visiting every other Sunday night, when the Church is given the privilege of addressing the congregation at their services.

### FELLSMERE

Over the last six months, the brothers from Fort Pierce have been visiting the homes of migrant

workers in Fellsmere. The families, who have come here from Texas to work, have called upon our Church to pray for them and have experienced healings under the hands of the ministry. We have also aided these families naturally to the best of our ability. When the work is slow, many of these people return to their Mission, Texas homes. Brother Rogolino is planning a trip there to visit some of them.

### HOMESTEAD

The work in Homestead is well under way, and meetings are now being held in the small mission house which was prepared for this use. Meetings are held every Wednesday and Sunday evening.

Brothers George Kovacic and Joseph Catone Sr. are heading the work, with the assistance of other brothers and sisters, including Brother Miguel Bicelis, who is the interpreter. The meetings are conducted in English, and Brother Bicelis translates into Spanish for the benefit of the mainly Spanish-speaking congregation.

There have been three baptisms to date, and many experiences have come forth through these new members. Much effort is being spent in the teaching of children in Sunday School classes.

Recently, Brothers Catone and George Katsaris traveled to Tse Bonito, New Mexico, to pick up a small bus which was donated to Homestead. This was a very important and appreciated gift, because the brothers must drive the people to the mission house and back for the services.

The Church provides food, clothing, and furniture, as well as layettes for the babies as needed. The Hollywood and Miami Branches have also prepared and served annual Thanksgiving dinners.

### ORLANDO

Brother Moraco reports that the Civic Center in Sanford, Florida was rented to hold meetings, the first of which took place this past November 17th.

Currently, there are five

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## Editorial Viewpoint . . .

James, toward the end of his epistle, enjoins his readers, "*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed*" (James 5:16). Is he suggesting that we recount all our past mistakes to our brothers and sisters in Christ? Is the prayer of another person somehow necessary for us to obtain full forgiveness?

Of course we know that we each deal with God directly, individually, and privately in repenting of our sins and seeking His forgiveness. With Jesus as our intercessor, the need to go to any kind of earthly "middleman" to have our transgressions forgiven no longer exists. The ultimate sacrifice has been made; our salvation is bought and paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The words of James, however, are not without merit. They suggest that there is a blessing in sharing, not our sins, but rather our faults, our weaknesses, and our imperfections with our fellow servants. Truly the Lord has forgiven—and forgotten—all the wrong that we've done; His word says that He's put our sins as far away from Him as the east is from the west. But as long as we're made of flesh and blood, we are imperfect creatures, serving a Maker who can and will make us perfect in Him. In order for Him to do so, however, we must be willing to face the fact that there is room for improvement in our lives.

Having an objective awareness of our faults—admitting that we're flawed—is, in itself, contrary to our carnal nature. Only the Spirit of God and its attending fruit—humility, meekness, etc.—can enable us to deal with the unpleasant task of discovering and working to reduce the areas of deficiency in our lives. Human pride will blur our perception of ourselves with self-delusion and denial—we won't even consider the *possibility* that shortcomings exist.

Without humility, if someone, including the Lord, should try to make a person aware of his faults, however gently and lovingly, his immediate reaction will be one of defensive rage—he'll be incensed that another should see so deeply and clearly in him what he himself has never dared look at—and what he's worked so hard at preventing anyone from seeing. Until he humbles himself (or *is humbled*), God cannot even begin the work of perfecting this proud, "airtight" individual. And chances are, if a brother or sister should make the mistake of humbly coming to this person and, seeking help and encouragement, admit to having a particular weakness, fault, or struggle, the proud man—far from feeling compassion—is likely to raise his eyebrows in judgment, gasp in horror, and exclaim, aloud or to himself, "*That's terrible!*" convinced that he is somehow less a sinner than the man or woman speaking to him.

If, on the other hand, we can all work at recognizing and coming to terms with our own faults—both those we can change and those only the Lord can—we will be strong enough and brave enough to risk reaching out and sharing ourselves—strengths, weaknesses, and all—with one another. By bearing our mutual burdens, we strengthen and support each other. And as we pray for strength against and deliverance from our weaknesses, we find great encouragement when someone else is praying alongside us for the same cause. But the greatest blessing of all is the unsurpassed liberty and joy we feel when we've risked to conquer, and then, having found Christ-like love and acceptance, we continue to share our victories—and defeats—as we press on to the mark of eternal perfection.

# The Children's Corner

By Jan Steinrock



to work hard under the hot sun, in the fields, in building, and in making bricks. They were beaten and treated like slaves. But not Moses. Moses was dressed in costly clothes and lived among the wealthiest, most powerful people in the country.

Did Moses ever feel embarrassed by his true background? Did the other wealthy children ever persecute him? We don't know. We only know that he suffered from a severe stuttering problem, and even as a man dreaded speaking in front of people.

His family must have felt different, too. At first they prospered when Pharaoh's daughter paid Moses' mother to stay at home and raise the baby. Then their hearts must have ached as the little brother was taken away to the palace. People probably said many terrible things to them about Moses

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## The Trials of Moses' Family

Dear Boys and Girls,

Did you ever think how hard it must have been to be the brother, Aaron, or the sister, Miriam, of Moses? We all know the story of how Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, decided to kill all male Hebrew babies. He was afraid these Hebrew boys would grow up to be strong enemies of the Egyptians and take over his country.

Moses' mother made a waterproof basket to hide her healthy, beautiful baby in. Moses' older sister, Miriam, hid in the plants along the river to watch the baby in his basket. Can you imagine how lonely and scared Miriam felt, hiding in the weeds there, hour after hour, protecting her baby brother?

But the day came when Miriam heard voices! The daughter of the Pharaoh had come with her servants to wash in the river. She discovered the basket and as she opened it, the baby Moses cried. Her heart was touched, and she said, "This is one of the Hebrew children!"

Miriam's heart must have pounded as she thought what would happen to Moses and her family for hiding him. Bravely, she spoke to the Egyptian princess and told her she knew a Hebrew woman (her mother) who could feed and care for the baby. The princess agreed and sent for Miriam's mother. Her command was for the mother to raise the baby and bring him to her when he was older, to be her son! She declared she would pay for the baby's care. We can imagine the family was filled with joy!

But how did they feel as the months passed and they realized they would have to give their baby away? They were Hebrews, who knew God. The Egyptians worshipped ugly statues that had the heads of dogs, birds, and crocodiles. The Egyptians hated and feared Moses' people. The Pharaoh used the Hebrew people as slaves. But not baby Moses.

Moses was taken by the princess of Egypt and taught the rich ways of the rulers. I wonder how Aaron, and Miriam, and Moses' mother and father felt when they saw Moses start acting like and dressing like an Egyptian prince.

As he grew, Moses no doubt spent less and less time with them but was sent to classes in how to govern, to drive chariots, how to lead a nation. Many times his family must have prayed to the Lord and wondered why—why was their beautiful son being raised in such a strange way? No one knew that Moses would become the leader of the future Hebrew nation.

Moses' family must have feared for his soul as he learned pagan, ungodly ways. They must have given him special attention and tried to teach him as much as they could when he was very tiny about loving and believing in the one true God, and Hebrew ways.

Probably, many people were jealous about Moses' family's connection with Pharaoh's daughter. Miriam and Aaron had a baby brother protected from death by Pharaoh's soldiers; no one else did. Their family was getting special treatment.

The Hebrew people were forced

### WORD SEARCH

GOD'S	LEADER
WONDERFUL	FOR
PLAN	HEBREW
DAUGHTER	NATION
SAVED	MIRIAM
AND	AARON
EDUCATED	SLAVE
MOSES	MAKE
AS	BRICKS
A	

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

## Our Women Today

### Michigan-Ontario Area Ladies' Uplift Circle Retreat

By Sister Brenda Capone

On November 2 and 3, 1991, the Michigan-Ontario Area Ladies' Uplift Circle held a weekend retreat at the Ramada Heritage Center in Southgate, MI. The weekend began at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, when we were given numbered name tags. Later, when we attended our luncheon, we sat at the table that matched the number on our tags. The purpose of this was to make us sit with someone whom we wouldn't normally sit with, and get acquainted with someone new.

The theme of our afternoon seminar was "Unity—Understanding Enough to Care and Caring Enough to Understand." We talked about many things that we sometimes do or say, without thinking, which may offend or hurt others. The conclusion we arrived at was that sometimes the best thing to do is just give a hug and say I love you, rather than make a remark that may not be understood as intended. Many of the women at the seminar shared their feelings, experiences, and thoughts on this and all agreed that each of us must try harder to give comfort and help to one another while being guided by the hand of God. A poem was read by one of our seminar leaders that spoke of having a positive attitude

instead of a negative one, and how very important it is to think before we speak. Becoming sensitive and compassionate to others is certainly one of the major ingredients in achieving love and unity among ourselves.

Following the seminar, we went to our hotel rooms for a few hours. During this time, we visited with each other and discussed many things from our seminar. In the evening, we gathered in the dining room for a wonderful dinner. After we enjoyed the delicious meal, the evening activities began. Games were played using the *Songs of Zion* and scripture stories about people's lives. There was much laughter, and it felt wonderful to laugh and see others laugh along with you. A small pink paper bag called a "Care Kit" was given to each person present. This idea came from a sister in Ohio. The kit contained many small commonplace items, like a tissue to wipe away a tear—our own or someone else's—that would serve as a way to remind us to stop and care for others and for ourselves. Our evening of dining and entertainment ended around 9:00 p.m., but some of the women chose to extend the evening by meeting in a small conference room reserved for our Circle group.

We awoke on Sunday morning with our spirits refreshed. Everyone was looking forward to feeling more of the Lord's Love. Brothers Alex Gentile and Kerry Carlini were invited to hold a Sunday morning service with us. Both brothers spoke on the importance of taking time for the Lord, whether it be in prayer, reading the Scriptures, or visiting with the brothers

and sisters. We must also take time to feed the Spirit that has been given to us by our Lord.

Everything that we experienced this weekend blended together so beautifully that all who attended truly felt God's wonderful blessings. The sisters who organized and conducted this weekend retreat did a wonderful job. Everyone who took part in the retreat left with beautiful memories of the weekend, and with a spirit of determination to be more understanding and compassionate towards others.

### Note of Thanks

Josh and Donna Small, grandchildren of Sister Hettie Benyola of the Elkins, WV Mission, would like to thank all the brothers and sisters for their prayers and cards received while in the hospital.

"A special thanks to Brother Rich Scaglione, Brother Dick Lawson, Brother Bill and Sister Chris Colangelo, and Brother Matt and Sister Joan Rogolino for coming to anoint me. Most of all, I thank God for bringing me through my accident and for a speedy recovery. On December 2 I had a dream and I saw the word 'Jesus' carved in a rock."

Josh had a tree fall on him this past July. He received many broken bones and internal injuries. Though the doctors didn't have much hope for his recovery, Josh is up and about with only the aid of a cane. Thanks be to God! He still wears a back brace, so we ask that you continue to pray for him, both for his physical recovery and for his spiritual needs.



Michigan-Ontario Circle Retreat attendees pose for a picture.

## MBA Highlights

### Campout? In November?

Let's see, young people getting acquainted and establishing strong bonds in the Spirit, enjoying one another's company, sleeping in dorm rooms, eating in a cafeteria, singing praises together, preaching, testimony, prayer, staying up late laughing and annoying Brother Nick Francione at 3 a.m., rural scenery, happy reunions with beloved friends and family from all over the country whom you haven't seen in a long time—sure sounds like Campout to me.

But wait, it's November, so it can't be! No, it wasn't Campout, but pretty close. It was the GMBA November Conference, held at the Ciotti Manor in Butler, PA, on November 8 and 9, 1991, where hopes of increased participation sparked the idea of changing the site of conference from the auditorium, and turned into a smash success.

From Friday night, as saints arrived and were assigned rooms, through Saturday's smooth-as-the-Spirit business meetings, (where the

body voted to donate a total of \$6,000 to four specific and very worthy missionary needs,) into the night service, we felt something special happening. Each song offered was filled with tender and heartfelt praise and many tears flowed. Each testimony was seasoned with God's sweet Spirit, and we were moved by Brother Ken Staley's account of God's hand moving in his life during the recent passing of his brother, Jim. Brother Ken's ultimate invitation to come to Jesus, I believe, found its mark in some heart that night. Time will tell.

After the service, there was pizza in the cafeteria and great-fun-activities planned for whoever had the spunk. Scavenger hunts took place. Volleyball—even bowling in the four old lanes in the basement of the building. Other saints and friends sat in circles around tables and shared testimonies. To our delight, there were many surprise attendees from Florida, California, and Arizona.

There was an electricity and energy in the air all weekend that was so reminiscent of Campout, that one couldn't help but come into Sunday's meeting with great anticipation. Many saints came from neighboring areas of Pennsylvania and Ohio, and those attending con-

ference but staying off-camp filled the auditorium of the Manor. Brother Mike LaSala read from Matthew, the invitation of Christ to "Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." He told of his recent visit to Jerusalem and encouraged the young people to grab hold of the truth of the Gospel Restored. Brother Ken Staley, our GMBA Chaplain for the past four years, Brother John DiBattista, our new GMBA Chaplain, and Brother Ken Lombardo all followed with words of invitation, encouragement, and the future of the Church, with songs and words of testimony from the young people interspersed throughout.

Saying good-bye reminded us of Campout, too, because it was as sad as it always is at Camp, but we all felt a great sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from this experimental conference. We look forward to next conference working out as beautifully and memorably as this one. But I doubt that it will remind us of Campout, since we'll actually be at Campout. You see, the GMBA voted on Saturday to hold May's GMBA Conference at the GMBA Campout in Leesburg, Florida—another experiment. What will they think of next?

## 50th Anniversary

By Linda Reynolds

Mary Genaro Krasnasky of the Simi Valley, CA Branch celebrated 50 years of service to the Lord on August 17. The brothers and sisters from Simi Valley helped her to celebrate on Sunday, August 18.

The congregation sang a few selections of Mary's favorite songs beginning with *Keeping Step*.

Mary's daughter, Sue Wasko, sang *Amazing Grace* in honor of her mother. In Mary's testimony she tells how thankful she is to the brothers and sisters for all their support throughout the years and for her husband, Pete, for his love and devotion. Mary said throughout the years with the different illnesses and surgeries she has had,

she always knew God was watching over her and she is thankful. On this Sunday Mary took a few moments to honor her mother and father, who were such good people their entire lives and who brought her to the Church at a young age. She told how they came from Italy to America. Mary related different experiences that happened to her family while she was growing up in Warren, Ohio.

On the day of our sister's baptism, there were seven others who were also baptized.

The congregation sang one more hymn, *Blessed Be the Tie That Binds*, and presented Mary with a beautiful corsage and plaque. In the testimony service that Sunday, several brothers and sisters told stories about Mary during her 50 years in the Gospel.

We in Simi wish Sis. Mary Krasnasky many, many more beautiful years in the service of the Lord.



Sis. Mary Krasnasky