

# The Gospel News

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## Enter In

By Apostle James Nichols  
(published in 1864)

*"Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter and shall not be able to" (Jesus Christ).*

The above passage of scripture is one that every seeker after salvation ought to examine carefully, as our future happiness or misery depends upon the choice we make in this life. Therefore it behooves everyone to examine himself to see whether he is traveling by knowledge or only by chance; for the Saviour says many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. Now there must be some cause or reason that many shall seek to enter and not be able. It certainly must be because they do not seek to enter lawfully in the way that the Saviour has laid down, because, He says, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.

Now, in order to become a citizen of any earthly kingdom, we must first comply with the laws of that kingdom, so in like manner with the kingdom of God. If we want to become citizens of that kingdom, we must seek to enter in the way that Jesus and His disciples has laid down; not our own way but the Lord's way, remembering always

that he that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber, or as the Apostle Paul says, "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (2nd Timothy, 2nd chapter, 5th verse).

Now, any reasonable minded person will admit that the way that Jesus laid down, and which was carried out by the Apostles, was the lawful way to enter the kingdom of God, and as Jesus was the great lawgiver, and the Apostles the officers to administer that law, it certainly must follow that all persons wishing to become citizens of the kingdom of God, in that age of the world, had to comply with the laws of that kingdom, in order to make their citizenship legal, and be adopted in by those having authority, otherwise their citizenship would be illegal, and we can only find one method of adopting men and women into that kingdom, in the New Testament scriptures, and there is nothing on record to show that the method has ever been changed by the Almighty. It certainly must be admitted that the method laid down by the Saviour stands as firm today as when it fell from His gracious lips; for has He not declared that heaven and earth shall pass away but not one tittle of the word of God shall fail.

It will now be for us to see what that method was for. We find that

when Jesus was about to be taken from His disciples He gave them a commission, which is written thus: "And He said unto them go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark, 16<sup>th</sup> chapter, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> verses). We therefore learn from these words of the Saviour that they were to preach the gospel to the people first, and then he that believed was to be baptized, and the promise was that they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts, 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, 38<sup>th</sup> verse). But now we find the scene has been changed, for instead of baptizing them after they believe the gospel, they take and baptize unconscious babies, and then when they grow up to riper years they tell them to believe; therefore they do just as the prophet Isaiah said they would do: "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isaiah, 24<sup>th</sup> chapter, 5<sup>th</sup> verse), "and for this cause the inhabitants of the earth are to be burned, and few men left." This then is one reason that many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able, because they have changed the ordinance of baptism; they have instituted a sprin-

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## The Gospel Is Moving On

Jesus Christ came for all people. He came to rescue the sinners, whether men or women. The Lord did not exclude any one from His plan of salvation. How do we know this to be a fact? Consider His commandment to His eleven remaining disciples prior to His departure from earth.

In Matthew 28:18-20 the Lord states, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

It is important to note that He has all power. He can do all things that are expedient in the Father. The Lord can make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame walk, the lepers skin as new. He can and will intercede for our sins provided we present Him the opportunity. The Lord did just that when He allowed Himself to hang on the cross, suffer a cruel death by crucifixion, and resurrected from the grave. Jesus Christ allowed Himself to be sacrificed for the entire human family, that whosoever will believe in Him, whosoever will follow and obey His commandments, will have everlasting life.

The Church of Jesus Christ has the authority, power and commission to preach The Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world. No nation, no people, no language will be overlooked. All shall hear the message and divine commandments of Jesus Christ. Every nation, people and tongue will be given an opportunity to hear the true and unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is our mission. It is our commission. Every nation, kindred, tongue and people will be taught to observe all things that He commanded His disciples. His message was not only to His remaining disciples, it is for us as well. We have to possess the zeal, enthusiasm, and spiritual drive to

preach and teach all nations. It will take the strength and power of God to make this commandment a reality. We cannot do it on our own. We cannot do it with our strength. We can only do this with the strength and power of Jesus Christ.

The Lord stated in the scriptures that we will do greater things than He did in His lifetime. What can we do that He did not do? We will be used as His instruments to gather the House of Israel. We will seek them out in the North Country. We will seek them out by the direction of Jesus Christ, to preach and teach that Jesus Christ is Lord, their Saviour and Redeemer. We will go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people with the message of the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

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All people will hear that the angel has flown in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to be preached to every nation, every kindred, every tongue, and every people. No one will be overlooked. No one will be excluded from the message of salvation and the requirements for salvation. All shall hear they must believe, repent, be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost. All shall hear that The Church of Jesus Christ is the Church of the Lamb of God. It is the Church He gave His precious name to and it is the Church that He gave His life.

This message of salvation was also given to King Benjamin by an angel of God. King Benjamin declared to his people, "... wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ." King Benjamin went on to declare that the Lord sent His holy prophets

among all the children of men, to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same will receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with an exceeding great joy.

The Church of Jesus Christ is at the threshold of moving forward and carrying out this commandment of the Lord. It is on the move. The momentum is increasing and we are reaching out to many people and soon, yes, very soon, all people.

Trips are being planned and scheduled to visit the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guadeloupe, Ecuador, Romania and elsewhere. Requests for The Church of Jesus Christ are coming in from many nations. Letters are being received from around the world about The Church of Jesus Christ. People are hungry for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is represented by the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

You might ask, "How can we accomplish this with limited resources?" With God, there is no limit. With God, there are no limitations. The Apostle Paul stated in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

This "can do" attitude must apply to all of us. We can also do all things through Jesus Christ. Do we need finances? The answer is yes. God will provide. He always does if you look to Him. Do we need workers? The answer is yes. God will provide by moving on those who express a sincere desire to be used by Him and for Him.

Do not limit your thinking. Think big! Remember, ask and you shall receive. God will provide!

## Restoration

*(Editor's note: This is an excerpt from the pamphlet Apostasy and Restoration written by Brother Timothy Dom Bucci)*

As there are prophecies that foretold of the falling away so are there prophecies that foretold the

restoration of the true church and the Lord's work in the latter days which is preparatory to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

When the disciples inquired of Jesus for a sign of His coming and the end of the world, He gave them this sign, "And the gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

The prophet Daniel, seeing the Apostasy, clearly prophesies of a restoration. In the book of Daniel, 2:44, he says, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever."

The Lord at work in the restoration is clearly evident in the last days.

The apostle John saw in vision the restoration. He writes, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment is come" (Revelations 14:6,7).

The coming of an angel to Joseph Smith, Jr., who was the principal character in the restoration, was therefore in fulfillment of the Scriptures.

## Enter In

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cluding baptism. Neither is this the only cause that many shall seek and shall not be able to enter, for we find those in our day and generation that deny the gift of the Holy Ghost, while the Apostle Paul emphatically declares that: "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost" (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, 3<sup>rd</sup> verse).

Jesus says: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John, 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter, 5<sup>th</sup> verse). Now this language is so positive and so plain that we cannot see how men

can fight against such plain declarations, for if any man can enter the kingdom of God without the Spirit of God, the words of the Saviour fall to the ground and would be of no more values than the words of men. But seeing that He spake as never man spake, and that He spake the words of the Father, and that the word of God endureth forever. Therefore seeing that this is the case, every reasonable minded person must admit that it takes the spirit of God to constitute us heirs of the kingdom of God.

The Apostle Paul makes it very plain in his epistle to the Romans, 8<sup>th</sup> chapter, 9<sup>th</sup> verse. He says: "But ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit; if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His." Verse 14 says: "for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Judging from the above language of scripture, we must come to the reasonable conclusion that all those who seek to enter the kingdom of God without the spirit of God will not be able, as we have to be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance. It is a deed or a title to that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.

It behooves every person that wants to enter, to see that they have the spirit and if not, how they can obtain it, so that they may become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. It was by this that the visions of futurity were opened to their view; by it they could tell what would come to pass in the last days. And the Apostle by this same spirit could tell, that in the latter days many would depart from the truth, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, etc. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables" (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, 4<sup>th</sup> chapter, verses 3 and 4). Now these people who are now professing Christianity will admit that the above was all true with men of other

ages and yet they will try to get into the kingdom of God some other way.

O vain man to think that God has changed the plan of salvation, or that it will not take the same to save a man in the nineteenth century, as it did in any other age of the world, while it is written that God is unchangeable. Oh, that the human family would be wise and would consider their latter end and obey the gospel of the Son of God, that they might receive the spirit, so that in spirit and in truth they might worship Him, for if we have not the spirit we cannot worship Him in spirit and in truth, for it has to lead and guide us into all truth, and show us things to come. Therefore, leaving these few remarks to the readers calm consideration, and our prayer for them is that they:

*May strive to enter in  
The straight and narrow gate  
And make your peace with God  
Before it is too late;  
For Jesus soon will come again,  
His foes destroy, His saints to claim.*

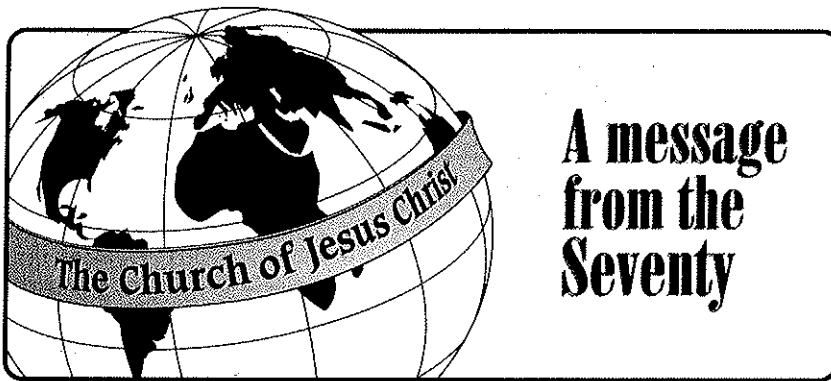
## Thank You

Brother Harry McGuire and family wish to thank everyone for the many cards and phone calls on behalf of the passing of his beloved wife, Sister Marie Azzinaro McGuire. Your many prayers on her behalf during her long illness have been greatly appreciated. A void is left in their hearts which only God can fill along with your prayers.

\* \* \* \* \*

I would like to thank all the brothers and sisters for their cards and prayers during Brother Frank's illness and also for your condolences in his passing this life. God bless all of you.

Sister Marion Rosati  
Forest Hills Branch  
Holiday, Florida



## Reports about the Mission Fields

*By Evangelist Carl J. Frammolino, Evangelist Editor*

Every October, many reports are presented to the General Church Conference. Among these important accounts are ones about the missionary activities of The Church of Jesus Christ, which give insight into the various fields.

The missionary information comes through the Missionary Operating Committee and the Quorum of Seventy Evangelists. The M.O.C. is made up of the Foreign Missions Operating Committee, the Americas Missions Operating Committee, and the Domestic Missionary Operating Committee. The annual report, which is a consolidation from the three groups, is presented to the General Church Conference and allows everyone to see what progress has been made spiritually and naturally.

The reports comprise analyses of trips, which have been made to the sites, the continuity of operations in the fields, and the reviews given by coordinators in charge of the locations.

Many articles have appeared in this column about Church mission fields in the past. Most of them have been about the trips, which have been taken to the various places, while others have been about the locations and the people there. A question about the latter would logically be, "How has this information, sometimes of an interim nature, been received?" The answer is a specific Elder is responsible for each nation and is constantly in touch with the field; therefore, he is in a position to coordinate activities in

and for the field. More current communication means, such as phone, E-mail, and fax transmission, can be used in the process. Thus, some information that used to take many days, and possibly weeks to reach across the miles can be sent quickly and effectively.

The Brother who is in charge of a mission reports to his appropriate committee in the M.O.C., and it is his responsibility to look after the spiritual and natural needs of the field. He also presents updates to the chairman of his M.O.C. committee.

### RELATED REPORT

In viewing the functioning of the missionary program, another related report is the one presented to conference by the General Church Finance Committee. Because most of the monies received in the Church go for Her missionary work, the Finance Committee is a vital cog in helping to assure there is the ability to continue the work being done in the fields. This group has the responsibility of collecting the donations and disbursing the funds to the General Quorum of Seventy Evangelists, which then pass them to the committees for the work in the various locations. Understandably, the financial arm is essential for the entire operation.

The Finance Committee presents an overall analysis of past expenditures, recent historical data and recommendations for the Spending

Plan for the next year for the entire General Church. The plan is the total for all the costs for the needs of all the General Church boards and committees for the next year. Actually, the Finance Committee is simply collecting the overall general financial requirements of The Church of Jesus Christ and is responsible for implementing and administering the mandated amounts. Once the plan has been approved by the conference, it becomes the budgeted amount, which must be raised during the year.

The receipts come from the contributions made by church members and friends. One can readily understand, then, how important it is for everyone to donate to the plan so the requirements can be met. There is always the understanding in keeping with 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:7 that "...God loveth a cheerful giver." That everyone should submit his or her share of the funds on a regular basis.

Besides the amounts given to the spending plan, interest earned and pass-through funds received by the Missionary Foundation Fund and donations from the General Ladies' Uplift Circle, the General Missionary Benevolent Association, and Sunday Schools add to the receipts so the total needed amount can be met.

### SOME FINANCE OWN EXPENSES, TRIPS

While necessary expenses and costs are paid as outlined above, some individuals who go into the mission fields finance their own trips and pay related costs. Also, some who labor in different parts of the Church pay their own expenses for official functions and activities. This private funding therefore relieves some of the costs, which would have been incurred. Notwithstanding, it is important that money be given consistently for the plan, knowing that the work of the Lord is ongoing.

The cumulative effect of all the reports to conference gives us the understanding of what is going on and how the Lord has been blessing the lives of many people, hopefully always

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**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Carl Huttenberger, Jr.  
58 Hickory Court  
Jamesburg, NJ 08831

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**  
Donald Ross  
201 Royalbrooke Drive  
Venetia, PA 15367

**CONSULTANTS**  
Alex Gentile  
Paul Liberto  
Leonard A. Lovalvo  
Anthony Scolaro

**OFFICE MANAGER**  
Cathy Gentile

**GMBA EDITOR**  
Jason Monaghan  
Nobel Vista II #406  
100 Nobel Vista Rd.  
Greensburg, PA 15601

**GENERAL CIRCLE EDITOR**  
Karen L. Progar  
277 Holt Rd.  
Alliquippa, PA 15001

**REGION EDITORS**

**ATLANTIC COAST**  
Kenneth Lombardo  
10 Rockview Terrace  
North Plainfield, NJ 07060

**GREAT LAKES**  
Carolynn O'Connor  
3158 Potomac  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

**OHIO-MIDWEST**  
John Ford  
1924 16th Street  
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223

**PACIFIC**  
John Chomsky  
6846 Via Verano  
Carlsbad, CA 92009

**PENN-MID ATLANTIC**  
Lucetta Scaglione  
303 Union St.  
Monongahela, PA 15063

**SOUTHEAST**  
Daniel Risola  
8035 Deer Foot Drive  
New Port Richey, FL 34653

**SOUTHWEST**  
Todd Heinz  
P.O. Box 4892  
Gallup, NM 87301

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## Editorial Viewpoint . . .

*"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 4-11).*

The gifts mentioned above are manifested among those who serve God in truth and in righteousness. They were once part of The Church of Jesus Christ until the Church apostatized around the year 560 AD. The years that followed are known as "the dark ages." Not only were the gifts not manifested anymore, but also there were no advances in science, medicine and knowledge. The Church had changed the ordinances of Jesus Christ, and substituted it with their own laws and doctrine. God withdrew His authority and the gifts disappeared. To appease the people, religious leaders said that the gifts were reserved only for the days of the New Testament. The Church's authority and gifts were taken away for 1260 years as was prophesized in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelations. At the end of this period of time, The Church of Jesus Christ was restored, including those gifts, as stated in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelations. I read in the Church history book of remarkable tongues, visions, healings, miracles, great knowledge and understanding when the Church was restored. As Joel prophesied, the spirit of God would fall upon all flesh in the last days, and there would be visions and dreams once again.

As we enter the year 2002, we realize that we are in the midst of God doing a mighty work to establish His kingdom upon the earth. So many prophecies are coming to pass simultaneously. God is truly the greatest at "multi-tasking!" As the work of God is increasing throughout the world, and among the seed of Joseph who will be instrumental in building that kingdom, we have to ask ourselves, are the gifts increasing among us at the same pace? Are we hearing of visions, tongues, interpretation of tongues, healings and miracles more and more? The Book of Mormon predicts that if the gifts were to be reduced among us, it would be because of unbelief. With God's work marching on, we must keep up with Him in every way. This means allowing the gifts to increase among us because of our belief in them. In an age of skepticism, we must remember as saints of God, we must not be skeptical of anything God does. Notice in the above scripture that the gifts are administered differently, and operate in very diverse ways. God's ways and thoughts are higher than ours. Therefore we may see the gifts come to pass in ways we never saw before. As long as it is by the "same" spirit, the spirit of God and the spirit of truth, then we can marvel at what the Lord can do.

We read that Jesus raised the dead. Imagine seeing the dead rise out of a coffin at a funeral! We read that Jesus healed the lame, blind, maimed and sick. The scripture says that the sick were healed in the very shadow of Peter. Imagine the sick being healed just by being in the very shadow of the Elders! We read in Acts how 120 people spoke in tongues in the Upper Room. Imagine 120 members at a conference or in your branch all rise up and speak in tongues! Imagine members seeing heavenly visions at every meeting! Imagine hearing prophecies and revelations all the time! This is all promised to us. It is ours for the asking. Therefore, starting this year, as God moves the Church to new heights, let us move our faith to higher ground where we can see the power of God manifested among us like never before!

# The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Steinrock



Dear Friends,

Did you know that the Book of Mormon and Bible teach us that God does not prejudge us? He is not prejudiced for or against us if we are black, white, Jew, Gentile, fat, thin, male, female, young, old, rich, important or unimportant (Read II Nephi 26:33).

God really and truly sees our hearts and gives us many chances to start over. In the Bible, Moses went through years of very different kinds of life. For forty years, he lived as a Prince in Egypt doing everything rich, privileged people do. The story tells us ships sailed up and down the Nile River carrying rich people enjoying feasts while musicians played beautiful music. Chariot races were attended and fabulous pyramids filled with treasures were built for the Pharaoh by poor slaves.

Many of these slaves were Hebrew people who served God but also did many ungodly things. They cried out as they suffered and God heard them. He knew they needed a leader, a Priesthood, Elders and Ten Commandments. God was preparing Moses to lead His people from slavery and idolatry to freedom and religion.

Moses killed a soldier beating a Hebrew slave and had to run away from Egypt because the law was to kill him. He lived forty years in the desert, far from palace life, until it was safe to return. During these forty years, he married his first wife, a daughter of a priest, Jethro. He learned of God and followed God's plan to go with his older brother Aaron and return to Egypt. God called him to lead the people free. The Hebrew slaves witnessed the horrible plagues sent by God on the Pharaoh and his followers.

They saw God's mighty hand in parting the Red Sea so they could walk across. But they were used to their old ways, their old food and meats. They constantly complained and rebelled.

Moses grew discouraged (Numbers 11:10-30). He went to God and said, "I am not able to bear all these people [complaining and with problems] alone . . . it is too heavy for me . . .", so the Lord told him to call seventy of the Elders and good leaders together.

God said, "I will come down and talk with you . . . I will take of the Spirit which is on you and will put it upon them: And they shall bear the burden of the people with you."

And God did. "And when the Spirit rested upon them [the seventy Elders], they prophesied and did not cease."

But two of the chosen Elders had not gone up to the tabernacle (Church) but stayed in the camp. One was Eldad, and the other Medad; and they prophesied in the camp to the people. Joshua went and told Moses and said, "Forbid them!"

And Moses answered, "Enviest thou for my sake? [Are you jealous or worried for me because someone else can prophesy?] I wish that God would put His Spirit on all people and all the Lord's people were prophets."

So now the burden was shared. Moses and the Elders went among the people and began to prophesy. But more trouble occurred. Moses remarried. He had not been raised as a poor slave. He was from a different world, one of education, knowledge and power. He chose for his second wife a woman from Ethiopia. This is a country in Africa.

His sister Miriam and brother Aaron were displeased and spoke against Moses. God came down in a cloud and angrily said, "I speak mouth to mouth with Moses. Why aren't you afraid to criticize him?" And for one week, He struck Miriam down with the terrible disease of leprosy. Her skin was dead and white as snow. All of the Hebrew nation could see God's displeasure with Miriam and Aaron for judging their brother.

God is a fair God. He judged Miriam's heart, as He judged the heart of Moses, and as He judges ours. Be careful of what you say about those who serve God. Remember, God knows all of our thoughts. Repent when you're wrong and start over. Love one another. He cares for you.

With care,  
Sister Jan

## WORD SEARCH

GOD  
CARES  
ABOUT  
YOU  
HE  
SHARED

HIS  
SPIRIT  
WITH  
THE  
SEVENTY  
ELDERS

I	D	E	R	A	H	S
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**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR  
To All Our Readers**



## Our Women Today

### Near To The Heart of God

By Sister Arline Whitton

On a beautiful summer day in California the General Ladies' Uplift Circle Fellowship Weekend was held July 19-22, 2001 at the Country Suites by Ayers in Ontario, California.

As the sisters began to arrive and greet each other, at that moment began our spirit-filled weekend.

The General Ladies' Uplift Circle President Sister Arline Whitton welcomed all 207 registered guests and asked the Lord to bless us. Our objective to be "Near to the heart of God" this weekend, required that we stay focused on what is necessary and be willing to adhere to the requirements.

A heart-warming welcome was presented by the Pacific Coast Area Circle in song and word. This was the beginning of our journey "Near to the heart of God."

The California sisters presented each sister with a heart that was made

especially for them with love from the materials that the women had in their homes.

In our seminars we were given specific directions with a passport and ticket to begin our journey. The specific directions were as follows:

To get near to the heart of God you must make a right on Kindness Way, left on Gentleness Drive, right on Temperance Circle, left on Faith Street, take the next right on Love, Joy and Peace Parkway. Stay on this road for 2 miles. Get off at exit 10. You will see a sign for the Fruits of the Spirit Thruway. Stay on this road for several miles and you will be "Near to the heart of God."

We had a seminar group of 24 teenagers. This was an encouragement and a blessing to all of us to see their desire to attend and be a part of the fellowship weekend. They are the Ladies' Circle of tomorrow.

Each Area Circle gave a program on our theme, "Near to the heart of God." The key note speakers presented the following topics:

"Jesus Use Me"

"The source of my strength is Victory in Jesus"

"The reason I have hope, Jesus loves me"

"Higher spiritual mind"

Brother Paul Palmieri spoke to us on Sunday morning. He stated that we can't give anything to God but ourselves. Some attributes for getting near to the heart of God—faith in God, then action, working in the Church and everyday in life. Trusting in the Lord, trust is an action. If you say you love the Lord, you must do something, not sit idly by. The time to serve God is NOW! Near to the heart of God is being near to the heart of each other. We want the Church to touch others hearts. We want people to say, "There's a person who is near to the heart of God," by our actions.

There were many testimonies given and hymns of praise sung to the honor and glory of God. Sister Iva Bordeaux spoke in the spirit, "The windows of my storehouse are open before you. I can take away the hurt, I can take away the pain, but humble yourselves before me that I may bless you." What an ending to our Sunday morning meeting!

A blessed weekend was felt by all and the opportunity to fellowship with each other was very uplifting. When women meet with women, they get revived. They lift each other up in self-esteem. Come and attend the next General Ladies' Uplift Circle Fellowship Weekend.



## Branch and Mission News

### Blessings at Detroit, Michigan Branch #2

The Lord has been so good to us at Detroit, Michigan Branch #2 this year. We have had many wonderful events take place including baptisms, blessings, powerful meetings and healings. Our sister Cindy Henderson who was afflicted with cancer, continues to improve and is now doing well by the grace of God. Brother Al Milantoni was once again healed from a life threatening illness to the amaze-

ment of the doctors. Sister Jan Steinrock on the day of her scheduled surgery, was told that since they could not now find the lump that was to be removed, surgery would not be necessary. Praise God!

We have also been blessed with many ordinations in our Branch. You may remember reading about the ordinations of two Deacons and Deaconesses in past *Gospel News* articles. We have been blessed now with the ordinations of two young brothers, Brother Duane Loyalvo and Brother Dino DiMelis, into the ministry.

The Brothers were ordained on October 7, 2001. It was an amazing day, filled with joy, anticipation and the solemn knowledge of the immense responsibility that these two brothers were taking upon themselves.

We enjoyed two services that day. Apostle Peter Scolaro opened our morning meeting by reading scripture from Romans 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Brother Peter shared experiences and words relating to this scripture and encouraged us to stay close to the Lord.

Apostle Dominic Thomas opened our second meeting. He spoke of the issues facing our country following the events of September 11. He said we should have a deep sense of love for the Lord, for His church, and for the human family. "This has raised a need to grow closer to God. There is a

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## Blessings at Branch #2

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need for inspiration when we get complacent of the freedoms that we enjoy. We are blessed on every hand in this great nation. We need to realize that with God on our side we will prevail."

"As we go down through life whether we are working as ministers or members, you will benefit from His guidance. He interacts with us. If you do not feel that you have sufficient interaction with Him, fast and pray that God will give you experiences."

He shared an article written by Apostle V. James Loyalvo where Brother Jim was asked to explain the Priesthood and its function. He shared Brother Jim's answer including talking specifically of the duties and responsibilities of a minister in the Church and how participating in these events may affect them.

We continued our meeting with the ordinations. Brother Duane's feet were washed by Brother Leonard A. Loyalvo, and he was ordained by Brother Dominic Thomas. Brother Dino's feet were washed by Brother Larry Henderson, and he was ordained by Brother Peter Scolaro.

Experiences were shared and the Brothers testified of their love of God, this Church, and it's doctrine. They both expressed a willingness to do God's work. It is evident that the Lord had chosen two willing and dedicated men as tools to help spread the Gospel. May God bless them and keep them close to his side as they learn and grow and assist the Church in its primary function of saving the souls of men.

## South Bend, Indiana

Sunday, October 7, 2001 in South Bend, Indiana was a remarkable day. Awesome, a picture words could not describe, and no artist could paint for it was painted and designed by the Master Creator. We met at the water's edge, the trees were arrayed in golden

glory with specks of red flowing graciously through out. Some sight to behold, this designer also had included the sunrays shining brightly down from the cloudless blue sky, as seemingly it was located just above our heads.

Nature in all of its beauty stood still momentarily in reverence to the will of God. The authority of God, walking into the water with a penitent soul, so tenderly preparing to perform the work of the Lord. The voice, echoing through the soft cool breeze seemed as though the trees bowed and the sky lowered and the sunrays encircled distinctly upon our Brother Alphonso Hopkins as he baptized Quantina Renee Griffin. Immediately the glory of all nature bestowed its favor upon Sister Quantina as she came forth out of the water a new creature radiant as the sun at noonday.

Brother Mitchell Edwards confirmed her into the Church. Her two beautiful children were blessed. Brother Alphonso Hopkins blessed Reginald Devon Edmerson and Brother Mitchell Edwards blessed Deana Chontae Griffin. Such a glorious day the Lord gave unto us.

## Multiplied Blessings in the Atlantic Coast

A spiritual peace was felt at the water's edge on the morning of August 19, 2001 as Brother Ken Lombardo stood beside the young candidate, Dan McNamara, who had requested baptism at the Texas GMBA Campout and desired to be baptized back at his home branch of Metuchen, New Jersey. Small choppy waves were spread smooth as Brother Ken lifted his hand into the air to call upon the Lord in the name of Jesus Christ to cleanse yet another soul longing to be added to the Lamb's Book of Life.

The spirit moved calmly and peacefully throughout those gathered at the water. When Brother David Catalano spoke from the Book of Mormon, Alma 7:13-16, "Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to

the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance; and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me. Now I say unto you that ye must repent, and be born again; for the Spirit saith if ye are not born again ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, who is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. Yea, I say unto you come and fear not, and lay aside every sin, which easily doth beset you, which doth bind you down to destruction, yea, come and go forth, and show unto your God that ye are willing to repent of your sins and enter into a covenant with him to keep his commandments, and witness it unto him this day by going in the waters of baptism. And whosoever doeth this, and keepeth the commandments of God from thenceforth, the same will remember that I say unto him, yea, he will remember that I have said unto him, he shall have eternal life, according to the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which testifieth in me." He then gave the invitation to anyone who wished to render obedience to the Lord and be baptized. The invitation was greeted by Brother Rich Gabriel of the Edison Branch, who then promised to serve the Lord, "with all my heart and soul!"

After Brother Rich came out of the water, again the invitation rang out, and yet again another soul rendered obedience, this time Brother Jim Burns desired to be a part of this beautiful gospel of Jesus Christ. All present were deeply moved by the abundant blessings falling upon us.

Still, there was one more blessing to come at the water that day. Following the calling spirit that day, the invitation was given again, and we witnessed Brother Luis Tenorio step forward to answer the call and give his heart to our precious Savior, Jesus Christ.

We all returned to the Edison Branch and the candidates were confirmed. Sister Karen Gabriel was



then reinstated into the gospel of Jesus Christ by Brother Phil Arcuri.

The testimonies were beautiful and our hearts leaped with joy for the blessings of God. Tina Arcuri was deeply blessed by the meeting and expressed her desire to be baptized. Sister Tina was baptized the following Sunday, August 26, 2001 at the river by Brother David Catalano and confirmed by Brother Tony Vadasz.

On September 16, 2001, the Sunday following the tragedy which occurred in New York City, the Lord provided us with even more of His merciful blessings. Brother Sal and Sister Donna Rios went into the waters of baptism. They were baptized by Brother Ken Lombardo. Brother Sal was confirmed by Brother Jerry Valenti and Sister Donna was confirmed by Brother Jim Link. Their testimonies were powerful as Brother Sal was at "ground zero" in New York City at the time of the attack.

These blessings were only part of what we've experienced throughout the last few months, as several were also baptized in New Brunswick and Freehold as well. We share these blessings from every branch, and it's a great joy to greet one another from the different branches when we gather at the river. We can never stop thanking the Lord for the manna of blessings poured out from His heavenly storehouse to nourish our souls.

## Blessings in Bell and Yucaipa, California

By Sister Linda Renyolds

On October 7, 2001, at the Bell, California Branch, 250 saints gathered together. Part of the gathering was intended to recognize Brother Ken Jones for 50 faithful years in The Church of Jesus Christ. His branch in Yucaipa, California told Brother Ken that it was a revival meeting at Bell, so needless to say, he was surprised. Brother Ken was baptized in Bell when he was 11 years old by Brother Shazer of the Vanderbilt, Pennsylvania Branch

on the same day his father, Brother Tom W. Jones (deceased) and brother, Brother Tom H. Jones of the Atlanta, Georgia Branch.

Opening remarks by Brother Bob McDonnell and opening prayer was offered by Brother Santos Zamora. The Zionees singing group made up of Brothers Ken Jones, Bob Sullivan, Ken Buck, Joe Nicosia and Sister Nancy Buck at the piano sang *He Changed My Life Completely*. Brother Rudy Carrillo from Yucaipa presented Brother Ken with a plaque. The ministry invited Brother Ken to open the meeting. He thanked everyone for attending and then spoke from Mosiah 18:20-21 where Mosiah instructed us to have hearts knit together, no contention, eye single to the glory of God, and focus on building Zion and that there would be two churches in the end, The Church of Jesus Christ, and the church of the devil which brings the wrath of God. Brother Ken stressed the need for UNITY throughout the Church. We are neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free, male nor female, we are all ONE in Christ.

Brother Ken referenced the current events and how much of what we are witnessing is recorded in The Book of Mormon. We are thankful to have this record, and we must believe in what it promises: "The righteous need not fear."

Brother Matthew Picciuto followed: "The members of The Church of Jesus Christ have all been preordained to do the will of God. We are all on the same team (the Church). A team does not perform well without unity. Find your place on the team and perform. We all have a purpose." Brother Matthew referenced the Israelite maiden who advised Naaman to go and see the prophet Elisha. He would be healed because Elisha was a true prophet to the God of Israel. We don't even know her name, but she was used of God for a specific purpose. God will use His people to perform the work of the Church.

Brother Paul Liberto followed: Growing up, Brother Ken was one of his heroes. Although close in age, Brother Ken being baptized so young and being large in stature, Brother Paul

looked up to him. He admired Brother Ken's steadfastness in his service to God. He is quick to follow God's direction. Always positive, and not discouraged.

Brother Otto Henderson followed: Brother Ken is like a son to him. We all receive a gift when we come into the Church—the gift of the Holy Ghost. This gift unites us together with God and one another. Together we have one goal and purpose.

Brother Jim Huttenberger followed by referencing Galatians 3:26-29. We are all the children of God. Through baptism we have put on Christ. We are now Abraham's seed and united heirs to Abraham's promises. Brother Jim remembered the times he would visit Brother Ken at his book binding company and how he would enjoy the fellowship with Brother Ken and other members of the Church who worked there. Brother Jim said we are all like different pages of a book; we come from different walks of life. But God is the "Great Book Binder;" He binds us together and keeps us united.

Brother Rusty Heaps cautioned us to be aware! We are living in perilous times and if we are not UNITED, we will fail.

Apostle Tom Liberto acknowledged Brother Ken's time in the Church and encouraged him to continue on and endure to the end. He asked Brother Ken to come to the podium and have people from the congregation ask him questions.

Brother Ken then sang a solo, "No Other Song to Sing, But That of Christ My King." The Mexican brothers and sisters sang a couple of songs as well.

The Zionees sang, *The Ending of the Sorrow* which was appropriate for today's times. Then the Zionees presented Brother Ken with a plaque from them. Sister Diane Surdock was asked to sing a song and she invited Brother Ken to sing with her. They sang, *This Is the Time I Must Sing*. Brother Bob McDonnell in his closing comments offered a few memories of Brother Ken as he was a young boy in the same branch and also looked up to

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## Blessings in Bell, CA

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him. He also asked the congregation to consider their walk with the Lord. Our salvation should be our highest priority. This life is not a rehearsal or practice run, it is the real thing and is the only time permitted to prepare to meet God. We need to improve the time. It is time to unite and reunite to the Lord.

During the speaking and throughout the meeting, various song selections were offered. The Bell Branch Spanish choir had one song, and all of the seed of Joseph sang together in honor of Brother Ken with his favorite Spanish hymn. The San Diego choir sang and Sister Christina Benyola from the Bell Branch and Sister Amy Buccellato from the Simi Valley branch sang a beautiful duet.

We had a short time for testimony, then observed the Lord's Supper. Brother Stacey Light closed our meeting in prayer that was followed by lunch, cake and fellowship.

## Conversion

*By Sister Tina Morle Rich*

The passing of my father was difficult for me. I couldn't imagine why God would let someone so influential in the Church and who was helping so many people, die. It made no sense to me and therefore made me very angry. It was those feelings that turned me from the Church 16 years ago. I never turned to drugs or a life of crime, I simply continued to live in a way that made sense to me.

The events of September 11, 2001 had a very deep effect on many people, myself included. I knew I was mortal but I never worried about dying. When the death tolls of all of those innocent people started coming to light, I began to realize that those people probably thought that they would be leaving for home at 5 o'clock that night, just like they always did. They took it for granted. It startled me into thinking

about all of the things that I had been taking for granted every day. I had such a strong feeling of regret for everything I had been doing for the past decade that I could barely look at myself in the mirror each day. I began to pray asking for guidance but it seemed the more I prayed, the more confused I became. I e-mailed my brother, Brother Ron Morle, asking him the questions that I had been asking myself and God, but he was on a business trip. I attended church again, but felt unworthy to even be in the building. I felt as if I was being torn apart. I was consumed with the feeling that because of the mistakes I had made over the years and after turning my back on God so many times, that God no longer wanted me in His Church. I attended Branch #4 the following Sunday knowing that I couldn't continue one more day without asking for help. Brother John Buffa prayed for me, and I no longer felt I was fighting my battle alone. The following week I continued to pray asking for assurance that God still wanted me in His Church, begging for an experience to be given to someone else, if not to me. I felt like I was being consumed with the internal tug of war that was constantly going on; I had no peace at any time during the day.

Then one night my thoughts turned not to being unworthy of being baptized but to the act of getting baptized. I thought of who I wanted to baptize me and my thoughts automatically turned to my father. I realized again how much I missed him and how he could have helped me during these difficult weeks. I decided that since my uncle, Brother Dominic Thomas, had been like a father to me after my father passed away, I would want him to baptize me. It was then that I heard, "Ronnie will baptize you." I had so many questions instantly: Where did THAT come from? Ronnie? My brother? The one who tormented me growing up? Oh yeah, he's an elder now. This choice felt so right, I knew that when the time came it would be Ronnie taking me into the water. But being who I am, I dismissed the whole event as being imagined due to lack of

The next Friday Ronnie called me. While he talked I was overcome by emotions and was unable to speak. All of the guilt and regret of my life weighed so heavily on my heart I couldn't form sentences. Yet every question that was on my mind while he spoke, he answered as if he knew I was trying to form the words. When I did compose myself enough to talk, I told him I wanted assurance that God still wanted me. He reminded me of all the times God has done things for me and my family, that I received experiences every day. Then he said the exterminator was there and he would call me back in a few minutes. I hung up and instantly began to pray. It all became so clear. I didn't need a special experience, I know God is with me every day from all of the things He does for me on a daily basis. I didn't need anything else. I knew that when Ronnie called back I was going to ask for my baptism. When he called back he started talking about his testimony and experiences that other people have had in the past and he said that sometimes experiences are sent to confirm an event. I felt prompted to ask if he had ever had an experience about me. There was a long silence. I knew he had. This was what he said:

"I had prayed for you many times after my conversion into the Church, and many more times after my ordination into the Ministry, and was often given a sense of peace about the matter. On Sunday, September 17, 2000, while witnessing the baptism of Brother John Flores here in Atlanta, I questioned the Lord as to when, as a new elder, I would be able to perform my first baptism? As Brother Ken Staley lifted his arm and began to call our brothers name, the Spirit of the Lord spoke to me and called in my ear, 'Tina Villa Rich, having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.' At this point I recognized that the Lord truly did have a plan for my sister, and now it was a matter of time for Him to work."

As soon as he told me I remembered the night in the shower when I heard Ronnie would baptize me. I