

## AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE



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# The Sacrament

The most important and most sacred meeting of the Church, our sacrament meeting, awaits us each Sunday. As we attend each week we are able to renew our baptismal covenants, remember the Atonement of our Savior and consider their personal impact.

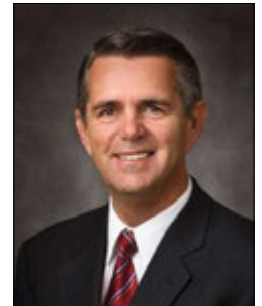
The quality of our sacrament experience depends to a large degree on our personal preparation for the meeting. Yes, there is an expectation that our priesthood leaders have the meeting well planned with beautiful prelude music playing and the sacrament emblems prepared well before the meeting begins, but the most meaningful preparation is our personal preparation. Even before we leave our homes for the Church meetings of the day we can prepare our minds for the sacrament experience. Sister Ardern and I have found that as we

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listen to sacred music while we prepare for Church there is an increase of the Spirit in our home and it adds to our personal preparation. Personal sincere prayer helps to further prepare us for this special opportunity. We are under scriptural command not to partake of the sacrament unworthily (see 3 Nephi 18:29) and so time on bended knees is important for our preparation. We must seek through our prayers and actions to partake of the emblems with a “broken heart” (repentant) and a “contrite spirit” (obedient)

which are both preconditions of true repentance (see 2 Nephi 2:6-7). Further to our preparation we will want to consider how we look, for in respect of the occasion we will want to be clothed in our Sunday best. Arriving well before the meeting begins and being seated quietly in the chapel will also add to the reverence of the occasion and to our personal experience.



Elder Ian S. Ardern  
Philippines Area Presidency

*The quality of our sacrament experience depends to a large degree on our personal preparation for the meeting.*

*During the passing of the sacrament we wait patiently yet with eagerness to reverently partake of the emblems. Our partaking of the bread and water is our pledge to be true to the covenants we have made.*



Young children sometimes find it difficult to be reverent for the entire 70-minute sacrament program, and to encourage reverence, parents often have a toy, a book, or perhaps some crayons to keep little ones quiet. In their tender years, please consider having these put to one side during the actual sacrament service. You will find that doing this increases the reverence children feel for the sacrament in their later years.



The hymns of the sacrament have been carefully chosen for the messages they give. As we sing hymns such as, "I Stand all Amazed," "Upon the Cross of Calvary," or "While of These Emblems We Partake" we are reminded of our doctrine and put our minds into a place of reverence, which invites the Holy Ghost to be with us. As we sing the hymns with confidence, regardless of how poor our pitch or tune may be,

our testimonies will increase, our faith fortified and we will be drawn nearer to God, for "the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me" (D&C 25:12).

The sacrament prayers (see D&C 20:77, 79) were revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith and are two of just a very few written prayers in the Church. The words of the sacramental prayers should be carefully listened to, as they invite us to become more like the Savior as we covenant to always remember Him, keep His commandments and to take His name upon us. As we do these three things the Lord promises to send His Spirit to be with us.

During the passing of the sacrament we wait patiently yet with eagerness to reverently partake of the emblems. Our partaking of the bread and water is our pledge to be true to the covenants we have made. The Area Presidency invites you to attend all of your Church meetings each week with family and friends and promises you that in so doing, you will find an increase of happiness, especially as you join in partaking of the sacrament. ■

*Photos by Noel Maglaque, Edwin Redrino and Felvir Ordinario.*

# How Has the Priesthood Blessed Me and My Family?

**T**eaching my sons about the importance of going on a full-time mission happens during their Primary years. I always remind them that one of the BEST decisions they can make is to go when the Lord asks them to go, wherever their calling would bring them. Seminary and institute classes coupled with family prayers and counseling help me guide them towards this decision. I have proven with all of my sons that if you teach and train them young they will never forget. My two older sons have returned from their full-time missions and two more are serving in their own respective fields."

**Vilana Bustillo**  
Mandaue Philippines Stake

**T**he priesthood has blessed me all my life. It started when worthy priesthood holders gave me a name and a blessing. I was taught by inspired leaders and teachers who have been called and set apart by priesthood power during my years in the Primary, Young Women and Relief Society.

I am grateful that I was baptized, confirmed, and was given the gift of the Holy Ghost by one holding the holy Melchizedek Priesthood. That gift became my guide to stay on the straight and narrow path leading to eternal life.

I was also privileged to be set apart as a full-time missionary by my stake president and served under the priesthood direction of two devoted mission presidents.

By being married in the temple with my husband Ryan, I received the greatest priesthood blessing. I can feel my Savior's love through him. We received a promise that if we will be faithful, we



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLORES FAMILY

*My loving husband gives me a special blessing each time I am about to give birth and we are blessed to have Jash and Rigel, two future great priesthood holders.*

will be united with our children and with the Lord throughout all eternity.

My loving husband gives me a special blessing each time I am about to give birth, and we are blessed to have Jash and Rigel, two future great priesthood holders. As we teach our children and help them prepare to receive the ordinances of salvation, they can also bless the lives of other individuals and families.

I will be forever grateful for the blessings of the priesthood in my life. Through it, I fully realize that I am indeed a daughter of our loving Heavenly Father.

**Juliane Margarete Q. Flores**  
Parañaque Philippines Stake

PHOTO BY ALAIN TAGPUNO



*The priesthood in our home is behind every family prayer, family scripture study, and family home evening.*

Our family life has been blessed in countless ways by the power of the priesthood. Through the priesthood authority our marriage was sealed for time and eternity. This promise anchored my husband and me in the gospel. It helped us direct our time and energy in making our family our top priority. As my husband honors the priesthood, he is able to receive divine help in providing for our spiritual and temporal needs. The priesthood in our home is behind every family prayer, family scripture study, and family home evening. These priesthood-directed activities and programs of the Church are our tools in fortifying our family against the evil that beset us now. I know that the blessings of the priesthood will continue to flow

in our family and our posterity in the generations to come as we strive to live the gospel and keep our covenants. It is the power in our family's eternal happiness.

**Karen Esmundo**  
*Quezon City Philippines Stake*

One time when I was pregnant, I experienced a severe toothache causing me a sleepless night. I desperately sought for relief and even sent a text message to my doctor for a medicine I could take but he did not respond. I prayed to Heavenly Father for comfort so I could sleep.

When morning came and before my husband Siege left for work, I asked him to give me a priesthood blessing. After he left, I tried going to sleep again half expecting that the pain would be gone when I woke up.

As I expected, I could no longer feel the pain when I awoke and I thanked Heavenly Father for answering my prayers.

The next day, I sort of expected that my tooth would hurt again. But it didn't. For about a week, I kept thinking that the pain would return but it never did. It was then that I realized that what I received was a priesthood blessing and it has no expiration.

I am grateful that I am enjoying the priesthood blessing within our home. I know that the priesthood that my



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husband has is the same priesthood Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have. I know that the Prophet Joseph Smith was an instrument of the Lord in restoring the priesthood here on earth. ■

**Amihan M. Parinas**  
*Paranaque Philippines Stake*

## How Can I Magnify My Priesthood Office?

### THROUGH MY DAD'S EXAMPLE

**By Ram P., 13**  
*Montalban Philippines Stake*

I received the Aaronic Priesthood and was ordained in the office of a deacon last year. I was happy and excited about it because I met new friends and I knew I could be of service to the Lord.

Recently, I have been called as the president of the deacons quorum. This was somehow new to me but my parents were very supportive. My dad was my first teacher in learning how to magnify my calling. In spite of his busy schedule as a member of the stake presidency, he consistently reminded me about



the sacredness of my calling and that I will receive blessings from the Lord if I magnify it.

My ward leaders, especially Bishop Tigno, always give me instructions on how to perform my calling more effectively.

Dad has been a great example to me in magnifying my calling. He always makes sure that we attend our priesthood meetings and sustain the needs of the quorum by giving training. As a priesthood holder, he assists me in strengthening the office I hold by daily scripture reading. I also say my prayers every day and lead the family prayer as I have seen my father do.

Sharing time in our priesthood class is an opportunity for me to share the knowledge I gained from seminary and priesthood class. This gives me a good feeling as I am able to strengthen my fellow youth.

I see myself as a future missionary just like my father. I started saving a part of my allowance which my parents taught me to do since I was small.

I believe that the priesthood will make young men like me more mature physically, emotionally and spiritually.

I know that the priesthood is a sacred calling from our Father in Heaven, which should be taught first in our homes. I am thankful for my father's example.



*Dad has been a great example to me in magnifying my calling. He always makes sure that we attend our priesthood meetings and sustain the needs of the quorum by giving training.*



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*I know that as we magnify our priesthood as young men, we will grow in our maturity in the gospel.*

## **A DUTY TO SERVE**

**By Aaron James N. Baligod**  
*Quezon City Philippines Stake*

**A**s a young man, I magnify my priesthood by participating in my quorum meetings every Sunday, visiting our less-active youth, helping to prepare, bless and pass the sacrament and supporting our priesthood leaders in their decisions. I also magnify my priesthood by being a good example and helping my fellow young men to do their Duty to God and preparing with them to go on our missions. I know that as we magnify our priesthood as young men, we will grow in our maturity in the gospel. By doing our priesthood duty continually, I know that the Lord will bless us and guide us so that we can be prepared to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. I know that as holders of the priesthood, it is a great duty to serve God. ■

## **EVE TO ADAM**

**By Ma. Teresa C. Pangilinan**

**“T**he gift of the priesthood is priceless. It carries with it the authority to act as God’s servants, to administer to the sick, to bless our families, and to bless others as well. Its authority can reach beyond the veil of death, on into the eternities. There is nothing else to compare with it in all this world. Safeguard it, treasure it, live worthy of it” (Thomas S. Monson, “Priesthood Power,” *Liahona*, May 2011, 66-69).

God gave women divine qualities of strength, virtue, love, and the willingness to sacrifice. And with this priceless gift, women—Relief Society, young women, female single adults—have a great responsibility in sustaining the divine authority.

I have collected responses from a few women of the Church on how can they support the priesthood:

“As a young woman I can support the priesthood office of my fellow youth in a way that I will encourage them

to first, finish their Duty to God. Second, attend Church meetings and activities regularly for they truly are beneficial, and third, to develop their own testimony about the gospel.”—*R Paulleana B. A., 15, Cabuyao Philippines Stake*

**“A**s a bishop’s wife, I adjust to my husband’s schedule. I make him feel that everything is alright though we are not seated together as a family during sacrament meetings. I teach the kids to do the same. I understand that he is not perfect but his call and his priesthood authority are. Respect matters.”—*Ma. Morena B. Baylon, QC South Philippines Stake*



**Photos by**  
Felvir Ordinario  
Alain Tagpuno  
Edwin Redrino  
Noel Maglaque

**I** show my support to priesthood holders by sustaining them and raising my hand during ward and stake conferences. This will give them confidence that members are willing to assist them in all their duties.”—*Neneng Meneses, Makati Philippines Stake*

**I** have heard that behind every successful man is a woman, so the kind of women we are and are becoming will have an effect on the men in the Church. If we want to be a good influence on them, we have to choose and do the right things, obey God’s commandments and set a good example in faithful gospel living. Faithful and obedient women will inspire and influence men to be faithful and to do what the Lord expects of them. (The opposite is true as well).”—*Venice Rios G. Puerto, Makati East Philippines Stake*

**I** will support Church programs such as seminary and Mutual activities, which I know are inspired programs by our priesthood leaders.”—*Patricia Anne G., 14, QC South Philippines Stake*

**I** grew up with my father and three brothers who are strong priesthood holders. I know that by having that power, they have responsibilities, so I do my best in supporting them and reminding them of these responsibilities.”—*Adrienne A., 15, Antipolo Philippines Stake*

**T**here was an instance that I had to undergo surgery, I asked for a priesthood blessing from my husband for him to feel that I support his authority. When my kids travel to far places they always ask for a father’s blessing. We have three sons and a daughter. They all grew up looking up to their father as an example being the patriarch and father in our home. Although they are now all grown-ups, they always consult him. In 47 years,

I lovingly pay respect to him as my husband, the father of my children and as a priesthood holder.”—*Pilar Fonbuena, Morong Rizal Philippines District*

**J**oseph Smith taught Relief Society sisters of their nobility as daughters of God, helping them to understand that God loved them and had a grand purpose for them to fulfill. Women in the Church play essential roles in Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation – just as important as the roles played by men who hold the priesthood. The Lord has endowed women with an innate desire to serve and bless others, and He has entrusted them with a sacred responsibility to use their gifts to help save His children. – See *Daughters in My Kingdom*, p 172.

**I** testify that when those who hold the true priesthood of God start to sincerely seek the counsel of women in the Church, and always desire their honest evaluation of things, those priesthood holders will receive greater inspiration from on high to lead and edify the children of God in this world.”—*Elder Eleazar Collado, Area Seventy*



*Faithful and obedient women will inspire and influence men to be faithful and to do what the Lord expects of them.*

# PHILIPPINES AREA GOALS

## Rescue the One

# Bringing Them Back to the Fold

By Sariah Guanzon-Ordinario

One of the goals set by the Philippines Area Presidency for the Church for 2012 is to engage both members and missionaries in “rescuing the one.” Elder and Sister Bevan of the Philippines Bacolod Mission share the following story of how such efforts of the missionaries and priesthood leaders to accomplish this goal has led to the rescue of “the one,” which in turn led to the rescue of his entire family.

The Baba family from Bacolod fell into inactivity eight years ago. The only baptized members of the family were both parents and their eldest daughter, 17-year-old Jennifer.

After the Area Presidency announced the area goals for 2012, Brother Baba’s branch president immediately acted on “rescuing the one,” and found the Baba family last December 2011.

After a month of teaching and some interviews with the branch president, Brother Baba returned to the Church. He eventually baptized three of his children and ordained his son John to the office of a teacher. On March 4, 2012, Brother Baba received the Melchizedek Priesthood, allowing him to give his two youngest children a name and a father’s blessing.

Through this branch president’s dedication and loving help, he made it possible for two of the Baba children, Jennifer and John, to travel to the Cebu Temple with the youth and perform baptisms for the dead.

The children, with the help of their family, put in much hard work and sacrifice for them to travel to the Cebu Temple and now they are a changed family because of these experiences.

During an elders quorum meeting that

Elder Bevan attended, he demonstrated to the quorum how to consecrate the oil for the anointing of the sick and the afflicted. The following week they had oil and individual containers and asked who would like to consecrate their own oil. Eight men lined up and Brother Baba was one of them.

Though these men struggled with reading the blessing in English, not one of them hesitated in performing this sacred blessing.

The Baba family’s return to the Church has been remarkable, with all the changes that have happened in their lives, as well of the lives of their children.

Elder and Sister Bevan further share, “What Brother and Sister Baba need now, as with all those we rescue and help to return to the fold, are callings and help in preparing temporally and spiritually to go the temple to receive their own endowments and perform temple ordinances.”

Elder Ian Arden has said on our efforts to rescue the one, “It is our hope that every member will rescue someone this year. In order to assist in this work, you will have to act. You will actually need to go and do something. You can be the person who makes the difference in the life of another.”

It has been a blessing to have dedicated leaders such as this branch president put into action the words of the hymn “off to the rescue we’ll hasten, bringing them back to the fold.” (“Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd,” *Hymns*, 221). ■



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