

# ASIA AREA LOCAL PAGES

## AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

### Conversion Brings Happiness

By Elder Joshua Subandriyo, Area Seventy

As I have visited branches and districts where I have been assigned, I have seen the gleaming faces of the Saints, obedient to the commandments and true to covenants of the Lord. I know they face challenges. Some may be quite serious. But they are strong and faithful. Then I pondered a thought in my mind: How does their faith and devotion indicate conversion to the Saviour? What blessings do we receive after being converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ? What must we do to be fully converted?

During my study, I read an article by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles quoting the teaching from President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988) on conversion as follows: “Converted means to turn from one belief or course of action to another. Conversion is a spiritual and moral change. *Converted* implies not merely mental acceptance of Jesus and his teachings but also a motivating faith in him and his gospel. A faith which works a transformation, an actual change in one’s understanding of life’s meaning and in his allegiance to God in interest, in thought, and in conduct. In one who is really wholly converted, desire for things contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ has actually died. And substituted therefore is a love of God, with a fixed and controlling determination to keep his commandments.”<sup>1</sup>

One of the great examples of conversion is found in the Book of Mormon, concerning Alma the Younger, where it is recorded in the scripture:

“And now it came to pass that while he was going about to destroy the church of God, for he [Alma] did go about secretly with the sons of Mosiah seeking to destroy the church, and to lead astray the people of the Lord, contrary to the commandments of God, or even the king— . . .

“And now Alma and those that were with him fell again to the earth, for great was their astonishment; for with their own eyes they had beheld an angel of the Lord; and his voice was as thunder, which shook the earth; and they knew that there was nothing save the power of God that could shake the earth and cause it to tremble as though it would part asunder.

“And now the astonishment of Alma was so great that he became dumb, that he could not open his mouth; yea, and he became weak, even that he could not move his hands; therefore he was taken by those that were with him, and carried helpless, even until he was laid before his father” (Mosiah 27:10, 18–19).

Seeing what happened to his son, the prophet Alma asked the priest to fast and pray. After two days, Alma the Younger received strength and stood up and began to speak:



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“I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit. . . .

“My soul hath been redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. I was in the darkest abyss; but now I behold the marvelous light of God. My soul was racked with eternal torment; but I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more” (Mosiah 27:23–24, 29).

Very few of us may experience this rather short, dramatic process, like Alma the Younger’s conversion. But most of us may receive a more gradual, subtle manner of conversion in our hearts, enhanced by our faith and testimony. But the effect is just as tangible and mighty as the one with Alma the Younger.

Repentance produces redemption and rebirth through the Spirit of God. Alma’s conversion brought joy and happiness in his life. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God.”<sup>2</sup>

Several months ago I attended a district conference. One of the questions we discussed during our training meeting was, “What do we feel when we have the Spirit of God in our heart?” Not long after the conference, I received an email from a local couple missionary answering that question:

We generally feel happy and clean  
Full of light  
Our mind is clear  
We feel love for the Lord and others  
Feel generous

Nobody can offend us  
We are very forgiving and kind  
Feel confident in what we are doing  
We don’t mind others seeing what we are doing  
We want to be with family members  
We want to help others to be happy and want to share the gospel of the Lord  
We are glad when others succeed  
We willingly perform Church work and magnify our calling  
We feel like praying and reading the scriptures  
We wish we could keep all the Lord’s commandments  
We control our appetites and emotions, feel calm, control our speech  
We speak and think good about others  
We feel sorrow when others have problems and sincerely desire to help them  
We realize that our thoughts and our actions are open to God

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counsellor in the First Presidency, has taught us, “We increase our love for our Heavenly Father and demonstrate that love by aligning our thoughts and actions with God’s word. His pure love directs and encourages us to become more pure and holy. It inspires us to walk in righteousness—not out of fear or obligation but out of an earnest desire to become even more like Him because we love Him. By doing so, we can become ‘born again . . . [and] cleansed by blood, even the blood of [the] Only Begotten; that [we] might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory.’ (Moses 6:59.) My dear brothers and sisters, don’t get discouraged if you stumble

at times. Don't feel downcast or despair if you don't feel worthy to be a disciple of Christ at all times. The first step to walking in righteousness is simply to try. We must try."<sup>3</sup>

This Easter we are reminded to ponder upon our Master, who died on the cross at Golgotha, all seemingly filled with sorrow, pain, despair, and death. This is a process which came after the previous night, of His love to His Heavenly Father and all of us, when He prayed and suffered at Gethsemane for the salvation and redemption of mankind. Finally, on the third day He was resurrected. He overcame it with victory over sin and death. What great hope this gives to all mankind! It allows us to receive immortality, and if we are worthy and endure to the end, we will receive eternal life.

Let us put our best effort into this mortal life, despite all of our challenges. Let us be deeply converted in our hearts and actions to the Lord. He has given us hope and the way to everlasting life through the Atonement. I testify that the deeper our conversion to the Lord, the stronger the Spirit will overarch us and ultimately lead us to happiness.

Here is the sure comfort from the Master: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

I know that He lives and loves us. I bear this witness in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, "Full Conversion Brings Happiness", *Liahona*, July 2002, 27.
2. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, ed. Joseph Fielding Smith (1977), 255–56.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Love of God", *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 23.

## Easter

By Lynda Dunna

I understood the true meaning of Easter after joining the Church along with my family. I did believe that Jesus Christ was resurrected on the third day after His death, but never understood why Easter has always been a special time for me to think about the love Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have for me.

God gave His Only Begotten Son to die for my mistakes so that I can repent and live with Him one day. I heard from an Apostle that Jesus Christ felt responsible for the great act of Atonement and He wanted to do Heavenly Father's will. I am grateful for the love that they have for me; I can never imagine the pain that Jesus Christ went through during those hours before His death. I know that I am responsible for the choices that I make. I know that as long as I live my life faithfully, keeping the commandments and endure to the end, I can, along with my eternal family, live with Heavenly Father and Christ.

My father passed away when I was 11 years old; I always wanted to see him again. I did not understand that it was possible because of Christ's Resurrection. When I



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Lynda Dunna

visited the temple and performed baptisms for my ancestors and was sealed as a family with my father it was a very special feeling. I do know that we will live as a family again with our loved ones, which is only possible because of Christ's Resurrection. My father will be resurrected also and I can see him.

As part of our family tradition for Easter, in the morning we read from Matthew, chapter 28 and share our testimony about Jesus Christ. I know Christ lives and He is my Redeemer. After all that I do, I know I need His grace to live with God. He will come again in all glory, and I need to be prepared like the five virgins who knew not the hour when the Groom would come. I share in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

# Grateful for the Plan of Salvation

By **Teresmica Dunna**

**G**od is our Heavenly Father and we are His spirit children. We are here on this earth because we agreed to the great plan of salvation which God has for us. I am grateful to God for giving us this opportunity to come to this earth with the power to choose good over

evil, accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Redeemer, be baptised and live with Him once more after we die.

John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

**Teresmica  
Dunna**

I wonder with awe when I ponder about our Heavenly Father’s love for us that He sent His Only Begotten Son to die for our sins so that we may be able to live with Him after we die.

Jesus Christ resurrected from His death and visited people in the American continent. He sent His Spirit to be with us as our helper and to testify to us the truth of all things.

From the time I was baptised, I have enjoyed the companionship of the Spirit of God. I know that my life has received the brightest light because of the Restoration of the gospel. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me the opportunity in this life to know about the restored gospel.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ gives me a new hope in my life. Whenever I come across injustice, pain and sorrow, whenever I feel that nobody understands me, the Spirit of God reminds me that He can understand me more than I can understand myself and the situation I am in, because He has experienced all the pain—physical, mental and emotional. He was a man acquainted with grief. Mosiah 14:4 says, “Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows”. Though



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He was the Son of God, He humbled Himself and was born in this world to suffer for our sins. He was obedient to the Father. He died for our sins—even on the cross!

In John 16:33 Jesus says, “These things I have spoken unto

you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” This gives me great strength when I face difficulties in my life. I know that Christ did overcome the world, so I can as well!

I know that this life is just probationary and that all good things will be restored back to us through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and all the dead will be brought back to life when He comes back to earth. ■

## Easter Is So Special for Me

By Anitha Kota

**E**aster is a special time to talk, think, ponder and share about our Saviour Jesus Christ and His life. I like the word *Resurrection* because this is universally applicable and eligible for all mankind throughout the world. God loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins. He suffered for our sins so that we may be forgiven if we repent. He had the power to live again after He died. We call this “the Resurrection” because since Jesus was resurrected, all the people who have ever lived on the earth will be resurrected too! For this reason our Heavenly Father planned to provide us with a Saviour. Jesus lovingly gave us the gift of the Atonement so that we could return to our Father in Heaven and become like Him.

It is wonderful to know that all the people we know and love—our parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and friends—will all be resurrected! We will all live again after we die. Jesus made this

possible! Through His death came the Resurrection and the assurance of eternal life. This is the Lord’s day, when we celebrate the greatest victory of all time, the victory over death.

Easter is a very special day for me for two reasons:

First, Jesus Christ was resurrected.

Second, on the 23rd of March, 2008 Easter Day, I, my parents and sister were baptised as a family. It is a very special and most memorable day in my life. This day signifies my Saviour’s Resurrection and my spiritual rebirth. My life has been renewed from that Easter onwards. I came to know more about Christ and His teachings, which helped me to change for the better in my life. It increased my testimony of Christ and took me to the temple to be sealed as a family together forever. I had a marvelous experience when I performed the ordinances for my deceased ancestors and loved ones! It gave me great satisfaction, peace and joy to participate in those sacred ordinances which our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ taught us to do. I know surely one day I will meet my ancestors and my loved ones who are on the other side of the veil and rejoice



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with them. One of my favorite hymns, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives”, gives me great comfort and joy whenever I sing and ponder about it. I can strongly testify that He lives, loves us, guides us, comforts us and cares for us.

We celebrate the Atonement of Jesus and some important things He did for us at Easter time. It helps the family to develop more love for Jesus

Christ as we celebrate Easter together. I love celebrating the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ through worshiping Him. I know Christ lives and loves us. May we worship our Savior and Redeemer as we celebrate His triumph over death on each and every Easter Day.

I am so grateful to have a wonderful family to love and learn the gospel together. I am so

**Anitha Kota**



blessed this Easter to get a very faithful and loving eternal companion, who always helps me to work for our eternal goals. I can assure that when I strive to follow my Saviour's teachings in my life, the Lord will bless me and my family abundantly. I want to celebrate this Easter by inviting the Spirit of Christ into our home, singing Easter hymns, and praying to the Lord to give me more knowledge and wisdom to understand and become closer to Him and love others.

Jesus Himself said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25). I believe Jesus was born of Mary, preached in the Holy Land during a ministry of about three years, died on the cross, and was resurrected from the dead. I believe that He suffered and atoned for my sins. I believe that He overcame death and that through His power all mankind may be resurrected with physical bodies. I believe that through obedience to the principles of His gospel, every son and daughter of God who comes to earth may gain salvation and return to live with our Father and His Son in their kingdom in heaven.

I express my deep love and gratitude to my Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ. Because of His great love for us, He suffered and died and was resurrected so that each of us can also be resurrected someday. He is our King, our Lord, our Master, the living Christ, who stands on the right hand of His Father. He lives! He is the living Son of the living God. Of this I bear solemn testimony this day of rejoicing, this Easter, amen. ■



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ANITHA KOTA

*Anitha Kota with her family outside the Hong Kong Temple.*

# Every Day Is Easter

By Sridevi Nidhi

As an only member of the Church in my Hindu family, I don't get to celebrate Easter like other members. Moroni 9:25 says, "My son, be faithful in Christ; and may not the things which I have written grieve thee, to weigh thee down unto death; but may Christ lift thee up, and may his sufferings and death, and the showing his body unto our fathers, and his mercy and long-suffering, and the hope of his glory and of eternal life, rest in your mind forever." Hence, every day is Easter to me.

I apply the meaning and purpose of Easter in my daily life so that I can live a Christlike life and return back to my Heavenly Father.

Ether 12:33 says, "And again, I remember that thou hast said that thou hast loved the world, even unto the laying down of thy life for the world, that thou mightest take it again to prepare a place for the children of men." This is my favourite scripture for the Easter season, because I feel that this scripture has the meaning of Easter and shows that

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the Lord loves me and is always there for me.

*Sridevi Nidhi*

As I apply the truth of the Resurrection in my life I am becoming more polished, bright and beautiful by heart. I have started to appreciate all the trials and challenges I go through with gratitude. They have been the mode and chance for me to increase and strengthen my faith and testimony in the Lord and in the gospel, which is making me a more precious and special daughter of God.

The Lord loves everyone so much that He gives justice to everyone. As I am a single member of the Church from my family and relatives I always wanted my family to enjoy the blessings of having the fullness of the gospel

in their lives. I was so happy and relaxed when I finished working on my father's, grandparents' and great-grandparents' baptisms and their sealings in the temple. This was one of the joyous moments of my life. This has brought so much comfort to my soul that I no more miss my father, who passed away 20 years ago without knowing the gospel! This was the only way that I can show them that I cared and loved them so much, and this was possible only through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ has made my life more meaningful. I have recognized the purpose of my life. I have learned to enjoy my life even better by loving and by being loved by everyone. I appreciate all the righteous changes and improvements in my life in spite of many different challenges. I have been blessed abundantly only because the Lord lives today, and when I resurrect after my death, I can live like Him, having a perfect body.

Let us share the gospel with everybody and show that we love and care. This will help them experience and enjoy the fullness of the gospel in their lives. What better gift can we give in this blessed Easter season? ■