



Area Presidency Message

Building a Firm Foundation

You cannot be in the Philippines very long before you notice the cranes that are used to build the high-rise apartments and shopping centers, that almost magically appear on the skyline. Just across the road from where I live in Pasig City there is a new 36-story building that builders were just starting when I arrived two years ago. In those early months, hydraulic diggers hammered away at the earth for hours each day until months later they had a hole in the ground that was deep enough, and on rock that was solid enough, to form the base for a firm foundation. With the hole complete, steel and concrete in enormous quantities were used to form the floor and the rising columns. Men, like ants, went from one level to another as they tied steel rebar, welded girders, plastered

PHOTO BY NOEL MAGLAQUE



outer walls, brought in electricity, and lifted pre-made concrete walls into place. While the inside of the building is far from finished the outside is already strong and sturdy, and gives an assurance of strength which it will need when cyclones come or earthquakes shake the earth.

Watching this building experience from my eighth-floor window has made me think about the effort we must put into building a strong family, one strong enough to withstand “the fiery darts of the adversary” (1 Nephi 15:24). Our family foundation must be built on faith in Jesus Christ. This is the same counsel that Helaman gave his sons, “And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation” (Helaman



By Elder
Ian S. Ardern
Area Presidency

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Daily personal and family scripture reading, and pondering on what is read strengthens the family. It is not about how much you read each day but how much study, pondering and prayer accompanies your reading that matters most.



5:12). An increase of faith in Christ gives added strength to the family. We need the helping hand of the Lord to strengthen the family. So, it is little wonder that the Book of Mormon teaches that “if there be no faith among the children of men God can do no miracle among them (Ether 12:12). Each of us must live worthy of the miracle of Christ in our lives which manifests itself through the Atonement.

With a foundation set on Christ, like the building across from my house, there must be four corner columns to further strengthen the family. The cliché “a family that prays together stays together” may be trite, but it is true for the Lord promises that as we pray in our families we will be blessed (see 3 Nephi 18:21). Sincere personal and family prayer at the start and close of the day (see Alma 37:37) is the passport to an increase of spiritual power. There is no better place to teach the power of prayer than in

the family setting. Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin of the Presiding Bishopric said, “We must teach our children that prayer is a privilege and not a duty... and should be from the heart and not the lips” (“Prayer,” Conference Report, Apr. 1949, p. 155-161). Each of us must pray for an increase of faith as a shield against the fiery darts of the adversary.

The second column needed to strengthen the family is reinforced by learning of Christ through reading from the scriptures and the words of the prophets. Daily personal and family scripture reading, and pondering on what is read strengthens the family. It is not about how much you read each day but how much study, pondering and prayer accompanies your reading that matters most. Holding fast to the rod of iron, the word of God, (see 1 Nephi 15:23-24) will help your family draw closer to the Savior, increase your desire to live a righteous life, help you to



Family members can help each other be true to their covenants by praying together, attending Church together, participating in wholesome activities together, and attending the temple together.

resist temptation; assist in overcoming temptation; and will heal spiritual wounds that may, if left unattended, canker the concrete foundation of the family.

The third rising column of strength for the family is achieved by each family member remaining true to their covenants. Examples of being commanded to be steadfast (see 3 Nephi 6:14), or true to our covenants include the invitation to hold fast to the iron rod, to enter by the strait and narrow gate and the plea to endure to the end. To endure to the end is to keep the commandments after baptism and to remain loyal and true to your covenants (see 2 Nephi 31:15). Family members can help each other be true to their covenants by praying together, attending Church together, participating in wholesome activities together, and attending the temple together.

The fourth column of a strong family is service to one another. A

family that serves one another is one that strengthens itself. Compassion for our family members means to feel love for them, and love motivates service and kindness in the home. A strong gospel family is one where parents and children serve one another (see Matthew 20:27). It is a happy family where a child surprises a brother by cleaning his shoes, or a daughter delights her parents by ironing the family clothes for the Sabbath meetings.

Many more columns, such as holding regular Family Home Evenings, could be added to the strong foundations of our families.

Let us each do all we can to strengthen the family by building a firm foundation and building strong columns that will withstand the winds of opposition when they blow. My promise is that as parents and children make a real effort to strengthen the family the Lord will assist in that great and noble cause. ■



PHOTO BY NOEL MAGLAQUE

How Concerted Family and Ward Efforts Saved a Boy from Online Game Addiction

Bruce's family transferred to Cebu City to help him and his brother get better educational experiences. Bruce, who was then 16 years old had a difficult time adjusting to the new changes and found himself with no new friends to hang out with. This became an avenue for him to turn to online games to entertain himself. At first it was just an hour or so of gaming but then turned into an after school habit. Soon this habit became reason enough for Bruce to skip school and even stay long after school just so he could continue playing his online games. Bruce would often spend all his weekly allowance for a day of games – a quick and drastic turn around which greatly surprised his family.

Without wasting time, Bruce's family held a family evening solely to address this online

addiction that was plaguing Bruce's life. The family, with Bruce's inputs decided to make a schedule for him to follow which allowed online gaming but only at specific times and days. If this schedule was not followed, Bruce would lose the privilege of playing and his allowance would be reduced. The ward also put forth efforts to help Bruce. The bishop made an effort to personally handle the Sunday School classes of the 16-year-olds and scheduled one-on-one interviews with the youth to find out how else to help them with any of their struggles. Bruce was introduced to the ward seminary and weekly youth activities which opened chances for him to gain new friends. A youth conference became another interesting experience which helped him lose his interest in playing too many online games. Because Bruce now has friends who attend the same activities that he attends, he became less interested in spending time on

his own, and eventually his family and ward leaders saw the difference it made in his life.

Bruce is now happier and determined to attend his school and Church activities again.



PHOTO BY ALAIN TAGUNO

Guidance from Mom and Dad

By Ma. Teresa C. Pangilinan

Being a teenager or single adult in today's world is not easy. Depression, peer pressure, social networks and media influences are some of the things they face. As parents it is important that we guide them to make right choices.

These are some of the experiences and solutions parent-members have to share:

I have three children, Jon-jon, 42; Judy, 37; Joseph, 31. All of them are returned missionaries, the youngest is still single. As a father I do my best to assist them. To Jon-jon, I counsel him to be strong and patient in rearing his family.

Judy's husband works abroad and she is left rearing the two kids. I feel that I should always be there to help her as a patriarch to the family.

Joseph is the youngest and still single. I am hoping that he will get married soon. This is the principle which I taught them--They learn correct principles from the Church, and I let them govern themselves.

They are all active in the Church; we belong to same ward. Each of my children is working to overcome their challenges by living the things which we taught them when they were small and from the experiences they gained from their missions.

I know families can be eternal as long as we obey the commandments of God. They must be sealed at the temple for time and all eternity. Our lifetime here on earth is a window of our lives in eternity.



Jose A. Camomot Sr.
Bacoor Philippines Stake

I have two children: Jessica, 22; and Justin, 17. Some of their challenges I know, but not all. Children tend to become more independent as they grow older and try to solve their problems on their own--which I think is good. But I'm glad they grew up close to me. There are a lot of things they still ask me for advice. As a parent, I try to have an open line of communication with them. Being a widow, I try to involve the priesthood leaders in the ward when I need priesthood counsel and support, especially for my son. There are times I believe he needs the type

of counsel that only a man who holds the priesthood can give.

I try to talk to them individually to counsel them regarding their challenges and hold family counsel whenever necessary. We also hold regular family prayer and try to spend quality time together to maintain the closeness we have within the family. Both my children are still living with me at home.

My daughter is already working as an IT personnel and my son is studying Entrepreneurship in college. He is also preparing to serve a full-time mission next year.

I am grateful for the kind of relationship they have formed with our Father in Heaven. They have both served and magnified callings in the ward, and have graduated from and attended seminary and institute classes.

I know they are nurturing their relationship with Heavenly Father and that is the most important thing of all. He will be there for them wherever they may be. He is the source of strength and inspiration to overcome any challenge that may come their way.

I also know that by building strong ties with our family, they will have a support system that they can always rely on for the rest of their lives.



Cherry Baluyot
Manila Philippines Stake

We have five children: Lyrra Deseret, 24; Limher, 22;

Schareen Credenda, 14; Rachelle Eunice, 11; and Rainbow Daffodil is 4.

Lyrra Deseret is one of a kind. She attended Church programs such as seminary and institute. She acquired her Young Womanhood medallion, finished her full-time mission and now serves in various callings in the Church. I feel that she has no great challenge she can't face right now.

Rachelle Eunice at 11 is very promising. She reads scriptures and does well at school and church. She pays her tithes and saves for her mission. On our monthly trip to the temple she always buys old issues of *The Friend* and gives to her classmates in Primary. Whenever a friend at school celebrates a birthday she gives the Book of Mormon as a gift.

Schareen Credenda is beautiful, making her vulnerable to admirers even from her nonmember group of friends. Cellular phone and Facebook makes it difficult for her to resist nonmember friends' invitations to chat and text excessively. As parents we make sure she attends seminary and works on her Personal Progress. As her Mom I assist Schareen with all these challenges by making myself her friend. There is constant sharing of stories with her. I listen to her as she shares who her crushes are. She lets me read her inbox messages.

Moreover, I always kneel down in prayer to my Heavenly Father. I write on some pages of their journals to tell them I love

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them. I record Church songs for them and post comments on their Facebook pages.

As parents we know that if we will keep and stay true to our covenants with the Lord our children will have an example to follow. And we know that Schareen and the others will stay in the path of righteousness.

With four daughters entrusted to my care, I feel that I can rely on my training. When I was young I was raised by goodly parents.

We encountered challenges with our only son Limher Jared. During his teenage years computer games were the priority. Though he never failed to attend church and graduated seminary and attended institute, it was still a struggle get him to focus on more important things.

We prayed and fasted. I asked the help of Church leaders. He was able to serve a full-time mission in the Philippines Bacolod Mission. Now, he is working at a call center. We know the challenge of that industry. But we continually do our part to patiently guide him.

Amidst our busy schedules we always make sure that we spend quality time with our children. We bring them to the temple monthly. We perform temple ordinances with them.

According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, some of these lambs may wander but the eye of the Great Provider is on them and they will be back to the fold (see quote by Orson F. Whitney

in Conference Report, Apr. 1929, 110). We have taught them the principles, and shown them the example and love they needed.

With this, we are comforted that they will always be protected and will choose the right and best in Heavenly Father's eyes.

Marivic T. Reyes
Dagupan
Philippines Stake



How do you show your love to your parents?

A good number of parents are successful in teaching correct principles and values to their children. Most of the children were able to adapt and live these principles. If you want to experience this, be earnest parents.

I love my parents. I show my love to them through my actions, showing them how good I am in the things that they want me to be good at. I follow what they say and respect their decisions. I take time to talk to them and tell stories of what happened throughout the day. I never forget to kiss them before I leave the house.



April A., 16 years old
Marikina Philippines Stake

I will be more responsible and I will always listen to them. I follow the rules that they have set in our house.

When they come home from work and I know that they are tired, I will take time to serve them dinner and treat them like a king and queen. I express my love to them every night before I go to bed.

Ferdinand Angelo M., 16 years old
Montalban Philippines Stake

I show my love to my parents by being obedient, caring and thoughtful. I do that by making sure that I go to Church and do my best to encourage my brother to join us because it makes my mom happier.



Beverly A., 17 years old
Quezon City Philippines Stake

I appreciate all that my parents do for me and try to show my love for them by not talking back to them and heeding their counsel. I also do my best in my studies so that they will know how much I love them, and how I appreciate them for sending me to school. ■



Portia V., 16 years old
Quezon City Philippines Stake

How do you show your **love** to your mother and father?

“**L**ast summer, our housemaid had a vacation. Since our parents needed help, my siblings and I needed to help in the house chores. I was assigned to wash the dishes and to take care of my two younger siblings. I always finish my duty earlier than expected, so I have nothing to do most of the time. During those vacant times, I did extra work. Because of that, my parents see me as a hard worker. I know that I made them proud because of that. I have showed my love for them through my actions.”



Mallory M., 11 years old
Quezon City Philippines Stake

“**I** show my love to my parents by being obedient to their counsels. I can also show my love to them by helping in our household chores. I would always give them big hugs before we go to bed. I also



study the scriptures with my parents every night together with my brothers and sisters.”

James Nephi N., 9 years old
Manila Philippines Stake

“**I** can show I love my mom when I try to be a good boy and obey her. I also give my mom hugs and kisses when she gets home from work. I always say ‘I love you.’”



John Dylan H., 3 years old
Dinalupihan Philippines District

“**I** show my love for my mom and dad by being a good girl always. I often hug and kiss them. I help mom arrange my clothes in my drawer and help my toddler brother pack up his toys after play.”



Alisha Kish J. M., 5 years old
Gingoog Philippines District



PHOTO BY ALAIN TAGRINO

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Trying to Be Like Jesus

"I always attend my Primary classes and activities. I also hug my mama and kiss dad to show I love them."



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Rianna Pauline C. D., 5 years old
Davao Philippines Stake

I strive to follow the counsels and advice of my parents in our family council. I try to do my best in my schooling, and be a good example to people around me. I also help in the chores at home like washing dishes and sweeping the floor. During weekends, I help my dad in cleaning his service car. I love my mom and dad and try not to do bad things that would displease them."



Kate N., 9 years old
Butuan Philippines Stake

I save money from my allowance in school to be able to buy gifts for mama and papa on their birthdays and other special occasions. I also show my love by cooking for them."



Carl Miguel M. C., 10 years old
Davao Philippines Stake

When my mom asks me to sing or dance to her, I do it right away. I love my mommy and daddy. I always follow what they say." ■



Kate Christine M. F., 6 years old
Manila Philippines Stake