

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Gratitude Makes Us Spiritually Strong

By President José A. Teixeira, Portugal

Europe Area President

We have been commanded to “thank the Lord thy God in all things. . . . And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things.”¹

Ingratitude is one of the greatest of sins; gratitude is therefore one of the greatest of virtues.

The importance of gratitude and its impact on individuals is illustrated in the lives of Laman and Lemuel. Their response to the Lord’s commandment to leave Jerusalem caused thousands of people to suffer untold misery for over 1000 years. Lehi and Nephi were continually praising God and thanking Him for bringing them out of Jerusalem. Laman and Lemuel failed to appreciate what the Lord had done for them. Instead of thanking the Lord, they complained. As a result, Lehi and Nephi grew closer to the Lord; Laman and Lemuel pulled away from the Lord. In this we see a great key to becoming spiritually strong—gratitude.

We also see that in order to be grateful for something we must recognize its significance and appreciate it.

As a young father, President Henry B. Eyring began reviewing each day’s events to see the hand of God touching his family. He said:

“As I kept at it, something began to happen. As I would cast my mind over the day, I would see evidence of what God had done for one of us. . . . As that happened, . . . I realized that trying to remember had allowed God to show me what He had done.

“More than gratitude began to grow in my heart. Testimony grew. I became ever more certain that our Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers. I felt more gratitude for the softening

and refining that come because of the Atonement of the Savior Jesus Christ. And I grew more confident that the Holy Ghost can bring all things to our remembrance. . . .

“My point is to urge you to find ways to recognize and remember God’s kindness. It will build our testimonies.”²

Gratitude builds our testimony. The very act of expressing gratitude recognizes God’s hand in our lives and acknowledges His tender mercies to us. This, in turn, increases our confidence that the Lord will hear and answer our prayers and guide our lives. In recognizing our dependence upon the Lord, we become more dependent on Him.

As our gratitude for the Lord’s blessings increases, our desire to come unto Him increases, and we will reach out to Him in all we do.

“Let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever.

“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, . . . and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God.”³

As we see life through the lens of gratitude we will look unto the Lord in every thought. We will not doubt; we will not fear.⁴

The greatest of human tragedies is blindness to the Lord’s bounteous blessings, whether it be His gentle commands or His tender mercies. In not



President José A. Teixeira

Chesterfield Members Give Helping Hands to the Catholic Eyre Chapel

By Jeremy Kay

appreciating the great things He has done for us, we will not use them. Foolishness is being given a gift and not accepting it. We show our gratitude by using the things we have been given. Chief among these gifts is the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Laman and Lemuel never saw going to the promised land as a blessing and opportunity for a new life. With their ingratitude, they trampled the blessings of God under their feet.

Gratitude enables us to see the hand of God guiding our lives; it strengthens our will to keep His commandments. We align our will to our Father's will. It is a small thing to recognize the hand of the Lord in all the blessings we receive. The reward is knowing that God is with us, guiding us through life's challenges. Our faith is increased and our confidence in God is strengthened.

Gratitude is the seed that in loving soil flourishes.

Gratitude . . . engenders respect, forgiveness, healing

Gratitude . . . generates uncalculated generosity

Gratitude . . . celebrates the tender mercies of God

Gratitude . . . enlivens personal revelation

Gratitude . . . prompts prayer and emboldens praying knees

Gratitude . . . prospers life

Gratitude . . . renders repentance, wisdom, course correction

Gratitude . . . enlarges hearts

Gratitude . . . cherishes covenants

Christ himself, on His knees, gave thanks unto His Father in Heaven.

May we cultivate this divine quality in our families. ■

NOTES

1. Doctrine and Covenants 59:7, 21.
2. Henry B. Eyring, "O Remember, Remember," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 67.
3. Alma 37:36-37.
4. See Doctrine and Covenants 6:36.

A team of members and missionaries from Chesterfield performed a Helping Hands day of service project at Eyre Chapel, owned by the Catholic Church, in Newbold.

Following a request for help from Peter Barr, Chesterfield Borough Councillor for Linacre, the team removed weeds and overgrowth in preparation for mulching the borders. The mulch has also been kindly donated by a local garden centre.

Eyre Chapel is owned by the Catholic Church and is run by a board of trustees for the benefit of the community. A website about the Chesterfield area states: "Eyre Chapel stands on the highest point of Newbold Village [in Chesterfield], at the meeting point of four ancient trackways. It isn't known who first built a chapel at Newbold but, in the mid 1200s, the Abbot of Welbeck became Lord of the Manor of Newbold and may have converted an existing building into a chapel. . . . The Chapel takes its name

from the Eyre family who bought the manor of Newbold in 1570" ("Eyre Chapel," visitchesterfield.info/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=6051991).

Eyre Chapel has also played a significant part in the history of the Church locally, as meetings were held here from time to time prior to the opening of the new meetinghouse. Eyre Chapel was a beautiful setting for many Christmas, New Year and Easter services that were held there, and many Church members have happy memories of the times spent, which included Easter egg hunts for the children and parties, including an 80th birthday party for Church member Stephen Rhodes, the nephew of Cyril Rhodes of Rhodesia fame.

Councillor Barr commented, "It's been so good today re-establishing a link with your church and the chapel. It's great to share a piece of our town history. . . . We thank all your members and missionaries for their help, and please come back soon!" ■

Members and missionaries on Helping Hands day at the Catholic Eyre Chapel with Councillor Peter Barr



MARK KAY



Newton Abbot members picked up litter and rubbish at the local Decoy Park.

DOROTHY MARTIN

Helping Hands Fun Day Litter Picking in Newton Abbot

By Dorothy Martin

Members at Newton Abbot, Devon in the Plymouth Stake carried out a litter pick at Decoy Park on the annual Helping Hands day of service in September. Families gathered at 9.30am, and after collecting their black bags and putting on their Helping Hands tabards, everyone commenced the work in hand. Bishop Peter Vousden donned his gloves and joined in with the labour at this much-loved local park.

Children had fun working alongside their parents, and Bishop Vousden commented,

“It was great to see young and old alike involved in community service in such a popular place as Decoy Park. It is a good way to teach children and grown-ups that it is better to keep our parks clean and tidy so that we can enjoy them to the full”.

Altogether some 16–20 bags of rubbish were collected, plus a very rusty shopping basket and a child’s trike. Simon Cunningham, the Park Ranger, was pleased with the effort and grateful for the help at the end of the summer season. ■

Grimsby Members Offer Service at Local Hospital and Community Centre

By Jenny Collier

The project at the Littlecoates Community Centre, performed by members of the Grimsby 1st ward, involved families and missionaries who brightened up the main hall of the centre by painting all the walls, skirting boards and ceiling. Even the young children enthusiastically helped with the areas they were able to reach.

The event was part of a project with community group “Communities Together,” who are committed to rejuvenating the centre. The building is a busy central point in the community where classes such as new age curling, line dancing, brownie meetings, card making, keep fit, Zumba, dance classes and pop-in mornings take place.

Les Bonner, chairman of the community centre committee, remarked, “There are a number of things in the centre that need improving. Giving the main hall a new coat of paint was our first priority. We have many groups that meet here, including a number of older residents, and now they will have somewhere much nicer to spend their time”. Bishop Andrew Pearson commented, “This community centre is a great asset to the local area, and we are delighted to have been able to help decorate it”.

Meanwhile, members of the Grimsby 2nd ward worked hard to clear and clean a hospital quadrangle at the Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital. “We turned a wilderness into an oasis,” commented Douglas Kerr on the Helping Hands annual day of service project. The quadrangle is regularly used by the hardworking doctors and nurses of the Orthopaedic clinic to escape the stresses of hospital life. This place of refuge had become somewhat overgrown and untidy, so the members rolled up their sleeves and got to task with tackling the overgrown plants and weeds.

Hospital sister Rachel Beckett said, “Wow, what an improvement. We are so grateful for the work the Church members have done here today”. ■

Grimsby 1st ward painting the main hall at the Littlecoates Community Centre on Helping Hands day



BY JENNY COLLIER (1ST WARD)

Wandsworth Helping Hands for Housing Estate Residents

By Sylvia Anderson

The Wandsworth stake members in South East London performed an annual Helping Hands service project for residents of a local housing estate.

The recipient of this community project was the Blenheim & Arpley Housing Estate in Penge, South East London. Over a number of weeks members of the Housing Association liaised with the local Council to arrange for a range of tasks to be undertaken. Approximately 50 members, including full-time missionaries and children, joyfully donned gloves and, armed with litter pickers, set

to work and cleared the assigned areas of all debris.

Volunteers were also given the opportunity to weed the gardens of two residents who very much needed assistance. One of them explained that as a result of needing to make frequent hospital visits to her terminally ill husband, it had not been possible for her to maintain her garden. She expressed gratitude for the work that was completed in her garden. Such experiences reinforce the great value of serving each other. ■

Wandsworth stake members offer service on Helping Hands day at a local housing estate.



SYLVIA ANDERSON

Nuneaton Cleans Up Local Park

By Melvyn Kitsell



Nuneaton ward members at the Riversley Park Helping Hands day activity

Thirty-five members from the Nuneaton ward gathered together at Riversley Park in Nuneaton for a few hours of litter picking. Wearing bright yellow protective tabards and with pickers, gloves and bags provided by the council, they were seen around the park and in various parts of the town centre. In two hours they managed to collect more than 40 bags of rubbish. One of the women found a set of dentures in the bushes, which was a big surprise to her!

Bishop Matthew Grant commented, “The life of Jesus Christ was a perfect example of serving, and His example teaches us that we should be active in doing good, in helping out in the community

BY KENNETH ROWLEY

and in serving those around us. As we strive to follow Jesus Christ, our desire to serve others increases. Opportunities to contribute to the community where we live will improve the lives of those around us in addition to our own. As a congregation, we feel more unified as we serve together, and we experience joy as we give help to our friends and neighbours.” ■

Huddersfield Rejuvenates Local School

By Eileen Webb

Members of Huddersfield 1st ward had a wonderful time at their Helping Hands day, which took place at Moorlands Primary school. Children and adults worked alongside each other digging out and refilling overgrown boxes, weeding, cutting back trees and bushes, and clearing paths.

Mrs Swift, one of the teachers at the school who came with

her children, was impressed with all the effort that the members made. Judith Tomlinson, who helped to organise the day, commented, “We like it when we find projects where the children are safe to come along and help or play. They learn a lot from working with their parents, and this helps them to develop a good work ethic for when they are older.” ■

Members of the Huddersfield 1st ward during the gardening work at Moorlands Primary School on a Helping Hands day



JUDITH TOMLINSON



WENDY RAND



Youth and children offered Helping Hands service at the Matthew Fyfe Care Home in Dunfermline.

Dunfermline Children and Youth Give Helping Hands to Local Care Home

By Jurek Mlotkiewicz

Children and youth from Dunfermline spent their day of service at the Matthew Fyfe Care Home in Dunfermline. With a few adult helpers to supervise, the young people were able to clear a raised bed that had been completely overrun with weeds, as well as clear some of the surrounding paths. In just three hours, the bed had been completely cleared, ready for replanting. All involved were amazed at the difference and at how much their small force was able to accomplish in such a short space of time. One of the younger helpers, Annabelle, age 9, said, “Even weeding can be fun when you’re helping out. I felt really good inside.” ■

Norfolk Members Clear Local Site

By Franz Sidney

Neatherd Moor is a 15-acre site in the centre of Dereham, in the heart of Norfolk, England. It features a small lake, a forest and large fields where local residents enjoy walking or taking their children to play. The site was looking rather shabby with some litter and overgrown weeds and ragweed. The local council was struggling to tackle the area, so when Bishop George of the Dereham Ward proposed to help clear the area under the umbrella of Helping Hands, the local Mayor was very impressed and readily agreed to help. The council provided strong gloves and refuse sacks, which were used by the 37 members who showed up on a cloudy morning in mid-July, equipped with bare hands and lots of elbow grease.

For over five hours they pulled weeds and picked litter, gathering 17 rubbish bags and 300 metres of ragweed. Local residents looked very surprised and complimented the volunteers for their efforts. Two referrals were made from the day and one young nonmember enjoyed helping along. The sky cleared just as the project drew to an end, and a warm sun cheered up everyone as they prepared to leave. ■

Bishop Keith George with the collected bags of rubbish after the Dereham Ward's Helping Hands project



FRANZ SIDNEY



NIC READ

Members of the Farnborough ward with the Benedictine monks at St Michael's Abbey

Catholic Abbey Thanks Farnborough Members

By Nic Read

Members of the Farnborough ward in the Reading stake were recently treated to a celebratory barbecue by Father Abbot, monks and parishioners of St Michael's Abbey as a thank you for service offered two years ago.

At that time 70 members of the Farnborough congregation organised a Helping Hands project to clear one of the abbey's fields of hay and sticks. Farnborough Abbey is a site steeped in history. In 1880, the French Empress Eugénie bought a house in Farnborough on the Hampshire-Surrey border. Crushed by the loss of her husband Napoleon III in 1873 and the death in 1879 of her 23-year-old son in the Zulu War, she built St Michael's Abbey as a monastery and the Imperial Mausoleum. The Empress was

later laid to rest there herself, in a granite sarcophagus provided by Queen Victoria.

The volunteer group 'Friends of Farnborough Abbey' has now established allotments on the site, turning it into a beautiful and productive garden for local residents to grow their own food. Named the Jubilee Allotments, it was opened by Father Abbot, Right Reverend Dom Cuthbert Brogan, on the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's coronation. This month's barbecue was an opportunity for the abbey to thank the members, renew friendships, and reveal the fruits of those labours.

'Friends of Farnborough Abbey' spokesperson Carol Knight praised Farnborough members' work on the site. "We couldn't believe how many turned out to help, how

organized people were, and how quickly the field was cleared. Without that service we wouldn't have had the allotments ready in time. It's wonderful."

The Benedictine life has been practiced on the site, where monks adopt a traditional ritual

of prayer and study, living by the works of their hands according to the Benedictine way. The monks run a guesthouse, a small farm of sheep and chickens, hives of bees, plus a printing house and a craft bookbindery. ■

much research can be accomplished without even leaving home. The use of online resources can now make it easy to find records at the touch of a button.

While the video presentations were taking place, the stake indexing directors, Arthur and Eileen McClelland, were in the cultural hall helping people get started with indexing. The family history library was open and busy as usual.

Three youth sessions were held with video presentations from Elder Neil L. Andersen and Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who taught the youth the importance of getting involved with family history and finding family names to take to the temple. They also started their own 'my story' booklets in which they were encouraged to record their memories.

The stake family history directors, Brother and Sister Whittaker, reported that the feedback they received is that people are keen to put into action the new things they have learned, and President James McCrudden, stake president, expressed his thanks to the Whittakers for all the hard work they put into making the event such a success. ■

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

Rootstech Comes to Belfast

By Linda Coulter

A RootsTech Family History Fair at Holywood Road chapel in Belfast was held recently, with local family history societies being invited, and was open to the public. The conference is held annually in Salt Lake City, and thanks to technology, those who attended the Belfast Fair had the opportunity to choose from 14 video presentations from Salt Lake on topics ranging from 'Fun Family History Activities' to 'Introduction to DNA for Genealogists'. Presentations were given simultaneously throughout the day in various parts of the building. This meant that those attending could choose the topics which interested them most.

Diane Loose, in her presentation 'FamilySearch and Beyond,' pointed out that, just as we can gain strength from stories about our ancestors and how they overcame challenges which were, perhaps, greater than our own, our stories can strengthen future generations. She shared up-to-date information about apps for smartphones and tablets which can help with recording your family history—you simply record onto phone or tablet as things happen. Diane also provided an update on the Church's partnership with other family history websites.

A presentation by Tammy Hepps, 'Top 10 Things I Learned from My Couch', illustrated how

Belfast youth working on their family history at the Rootstech fair



JOSH IRVINE

Canterbury Members Rally for Little Sabine

By Naomi Potter

Sometimes the smallest people can make the biggest impact, and for the members of the Canterbury Ward, little Sabine White is making quite the impact indeed.

In September 2013, two-year-old Sabine was brought into the local hospital after developing a rash on her legs. It was then that she was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. Her small, frail body did not take well to the chemotherapy, so she spent quite a bit of time in the hospital.

“She has spent the majority of her time in hospital due to side effects from the chemotherapy,” said Sabine’s parents, Simon and Amber White. “These side effects have included respiratory arrest and complete neuropathy. During these episodes, she has had numerous lengthy stays in the Padua Ward of the William Harvey Hospital, where she has received great care and attention.”

Members of Canterbury Ward were inspired by the White family’s ability to endure the obstacles of Sabine’s illness.

“Simon and Amber have been absolute examples of faith,” said

Naomi Potter, Relief Society president. “Throughout it all they have supported their family of three children—Asher, Maddie and Sabine—with the utmost amount of love and care that anyone would be proud of. They have spoken about how their faith in the gospel plan gives them hope and strength to cope with this trial.”

Members wanting to help out were limited in their ability to assist the White family.

It was then that Relief Society turned to organising a ‘Push, Walk, Run Mile’ to raise funds for the Padua Ward in the William Harvey Hospital, where Sabine frequently stays when she is poorly.

Twenty-three women, along with husbands, children and youth, pushed, walked and ran a mile along Whitstable beach to raise funds for Sabine. Together, they have been able to collect more than £3,300.

The members will endeavour to continue finding ways to support the White family and ensure that Sabine is able to receive the best care possible. ■

“I feel my Saviour’s love when I do my Primary presentation, go to Faith in God, and when I serve others. When I was in the British Pageant, ‘Truth Will Prevail,’ I felt my Saviour’s love by showing and teaching people about what happened all those years ago.” ■

Elisabeth: Age 11, South Ribble Ward

Elisabeth from the South Ribble Ward



JANICE PEERS



COURTESY OF AMBER WHITE

Sabine with her mother, Amber, on the promenade at Whitstable

Editor’s Note

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The signed written permission of all participants in the photograph, as well as the photographer, is required for the Church to use the article.

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EUROPE AREA (ENGLISH)