

CARIBBEAN LOCAL PAGES

MESSAGE FROM A MEMBER OF THE SEVENTY

Prayer

By Elder Claudio D. Zivic

First Counselor, Caribbean Area Presidency

We have the privilege of communicating with Heavenly Father through prayer. The act of prayer should take place with deep respect and reverence and in the proper manner.

During my life, I have had some very special experiences as I have raised my voice to the heavens. I testify that Heavenly Father answers our sincere and righteous desires in the time that He deems appropriate.

At times I have heard prayers that have not followed the established norms. For this reason, I have felt the need to summarize some important concepts that we must take into account. I have made this summary based on the book *Prayer* (1979).

I am including this summary below, and I pray that it may serve as an aid for all of us. I also challenge you to read all the scriptures listed below.

“Prayers of the saints are expected to conform to a prescribed standard of divine excellence; they should fit into the approved pattern of proper prayer” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* [1958], 581).

Salutations

- Address Heavenly Father.
- Avoid using the term *Lord*.
- Avoid unnecessary repetition of the name of Deity.

Expressions of Gratitude

- See 3 Nephi 19:19–20.
- See 3 Nephi 19:27–28.
- Ingratitude is a sin.

Public Prayer

- When praying in public, we speak for the whole group.
- Use pronouns in first person plural: *We, Our(s)*.

Petitions

- See 3 Nephi 19:21, 23, 29.
- See Alma 34:18, 20–24, 27.
- We must be willing to adapt our petitions to Heavenly Father’s will.



Elder Claudio D. Zivic

- “. . . Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

Ending in the Name of Jesus Christ

- “Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore” (Moses 5:8).

Amen

- Prayers should end with the word “amen,” which expresses acceptance or approval.

Sacred Language

- Address Him with utmost humility and reverence.
- Use the pronouns *Thou, Thy, Thine*.
- Do not use the pronouns *you, your, yours*.

Vain Repetitions

- See Matthew 6:7–8.
- This is a strict warning against the excessive use of pompous, unnecessary, empty, or useless expressions.

Length of Prayers

- “It is not necessary to offer very long and tedious prayers, either at opening or closing. It is not only not pleasing to the Lord for us to

use excess of words, but also it is not pleasing to the Latter-day Saints” (Elder Francis M. Lyman. Talk given in June 1892; printed by the *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1947, 245).

- See 3 Nephi 19:24.

More than Mere Words

- “Prayer is made up of heart throbs and the righteous yearnings of the soul, of supplication based on the realization of need, of contrition and pure desire” (James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* [1916], 222).
- See Matthew 15:8.

The Savior’s Example

- See 3 Nephi 17:16–17.

Through prayer, we can increase our faith and spiritual power. This power is needed to achieve success in our labors and to strengthen ourselves and others.

*More things are wrought by prayer
than this world dreams of.
Wherefore, let thy voice rise like a
fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep
or goats that nourish a blind life
within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands
of prayer both for themselves and
those who call them friends?*

— Alfred, Lord Tennyson

“Before the heavens are moved,
the earth must be moved” (Jewish
proverb). ■

Youth Devotional with Young Men General President in Kingston, Jamaica

The Public Affairs Council, Jamaica

The youth devotional was held at the Constant Spring Chapel in Kingston, Jamaica, on April 29, 2017. In attendance were youth from the eight wards of the Kingston Jamaica Stake. The stake president, Andrew Lue, conducted the proceedings, and present were all the members of the stake presidency; Elder Hugo E. Martinez of the Caribbean Area Presidency and his wife, Sister N. Martinez; with special guests Brother Stephen W. Owen, Young Men General President, and his wife, Jane Owen.

The first speaker, Elder Martinez, highlighted the concerns that are being shared by the leadership of the Church in regards to the rising generation, looking at similarities between the youth and recent converts who need a friend, a responsibility, and to be nourished by the good word of God. He also encouraged observing the Sabbath day in an effort to help youth increase their faith in Jesus Christ at home and in the Church.

The story of the miracle in Peru was related due to the preparation of the youth. When the missionaries were asked to leave Peru due to political upheaval, the stake had to become self-reliant in missionary work. The youth in Peru were able to serve missions in Peru, which contributed to the growth of the Church there. Elder Martinez in summation bore fervent testimony that God loves the youth of today and that they are the future leaders of tomorrow.

Brother Owen started his discussion with the example of the car with loud

music that was disrupting the meeting and how we need to drown out the voice of the world and listen to the still, small voice of the Spirit. He held up his smart phone and mentioned that this tool can be a blessing, if used properly, or a distraction. It should be used at the right time, in the right way. For example, no playing games in sacrament meeting.

He proceeded to show the youth media video for 2017 (see www.lds.org/media-library/video/2017-01-0010-ask-of-god-2017-mutual-theme?lang=eng), asking the youth to identify key things about the video in terms of the questions asked and how revelation was given.

Questions asked from the video included:

- Should I go on a mission?
- Will my family be OK after the divorce?
- Can you keep my dad safe at war?

Amanda Lue, a young woman, said that she noticed that in asking the questions, the youth also looked for answers in the scriptures.

One young man said that the youth wrote down the answers they received.

A youth leader, Sibthorpe Dennis, said that the questions asked were heartfelt and it is alright to ask God questions that we might not be comfortable asking openly.

Brother Owen indicated that one girl’s response was “still waiting” to show that answers come in the Lord’s timing and not necessarily ours and that we should be patient.



“We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

He potentially asked: “Do you know it? Can you teach it?”

At this point, Brother Owen shared that he knew his wife, Jane, from age 12, and they were linked together through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Sister Owen encouraged the youth to stand up for the gospel as she shared a story of one of her grandchildren facing persecution for being a Mormon. In one incident, he had to stand up to someone who was saying bad things about the Church. He declared that he was a Mormon, that what was being said was a lie. He told them the truth and also that he will not criticize anyone else’s religion.

She encouraged the youth to keep the Word of Wisdom, which is the Lord’s law of health, so that the Holy Spirit can be with them, to guide them and influence their lives positively. One story she mentioned was that of a young man who smoked an electric cigarette on advisement from a friend, and it exploded inside his mouth, causing excessive damage to his face.

She advised the youth to rely on the special gift of repentance, as it is a positive principle and will help us to have the Holy Spirit to guide us.

The devotional ended with the concluding remarks of Brother Owen. The congregation was asked to recite the fourth article of faith:

He encouraged the youth to share the gospel with others: faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. He showed a diagram illustrating that “wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10).

This showed how Satan’s plan emphasizes selfishness, cheating, lies, and uncleanness. The results of this plan will cause us to lose friends, lose temple and other blessings, and will eventually lead to everlasting unhappiness. On the other hand, Jesus Christ’s plan inspires love, confidence, stability, freedom, and ultimately eternal happiness. This all stems from our desires.

Brother Owen complimented parents who do what they do to be good parents and help their children to be good. In his final comments, he pleaded with the youth to do what they need to do to have conversion in their lives. He encouraged attending seminary, worthily partaking of and administering the sacrament, and having personal and family scripture study and prayer to develop personal conversion.

The devotional concluded with the joyous singing of the hymn “Carry On” (*Hymns*, no. 255), and the prayer was offered by Brother Odine Peart, a priest in the Constant Spring Ward. ■

Church Leaders Break Ground for Mormon Temple in Haiti

Mormon Newsroom Jamaica

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Ground was broken for the Port-au-Prince Haiti Temple on Saturday, October 28, 2017, as Mormons and community leaders gathered to participate in the event. The temple was announced by President Thomas S. Monson on April 5, 2015.

Elder Walter F. González of the Seventy and president of the Caribbean Area directed the groundbreaking ceremony. Elder Claudio D. Zivic and Elder Jose L. Alonso, of the Area Presidency, were also present during the ceremony. They hosted Dominique Saint-Roc, mayor in the community of Pétion-Ville, where the temple will be located.



Port-au-Prince Haiti Temple rendering



Church leaders break the ground for the construction of the Haiti Port-au-Prince Temple. Elder Walter F. Gonzalez of the Seventy presided at the ceremony and offered the dedicatory prayer.

A brief service was held prior to the groundbreaking. The program included music performed by a local choir and messages by the Area Presidency and local leaders. The program was conducted by Elder Hubermann Bien-Aimé of the Seventy.

“When I think about this day, I can only think about everlasting joy and gratitude for all that the temple means in our lives,” said Elder Gonzalez as he responded to questions from the local media. “This is a day of joy and gratitude when we start to build a portal to heaven as we come to better understand the importance of the covenants

made in the temple and how they impact our daily lives, both in this time and in eternity.”

Hundreds of Haitian members of the Church accompanied by family and friends, and missionaries from around the country, the United States, and Canada who served in the country several decades ago gathered to experience what they called “a historic moment.”

“For us, personally, [it] is a very emotional day. For us to dream that there would be a temple in Haiti was more than we could even hope for,” said Don Miller, who served as a

mission president in Port-au-Prince in 1998 and traveled from Calgary with his wife, Janet, to attend to this ceremony. “When President Monson announced the temple in Haiti, we were in the conference center and my wife screamed. . . . So we’re very happy. This is a marvelous day for us.”

Although the preparations of the ground started about a month ago, the construction will officially start right after the ceremony. Once the temple is completed, open house dates will be announced so the public can tour the temple before it is dedicated.

The temple district comprises more than 17,000 Latter-day Saints located in four Haiti stakes and districts.

There are currently 182 temples throughout the world, either in operation, under construction, or announced. Six are being renovated, and seven more temples have been announced for renovation in 2017 and 2018. ■

For more information about temples, visit www.mormontemples.org. The site includes general information on temples, the history of the Church, and the purpose of temples.



A powerful choir of Haitian voices sang beautifully to prepare the environment for the solemn and sacred moment of the ground breaking.