

AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

Ministering

Elder Marcus B. Nash

President, Africa West Area Presidency



Marcus B. Nash

Throughout His life, the Savior ministered to others one-on-one, one-by-one. At the end of His first day with the Nephites after His resurrection, the people wept when they He told them that he had to leave.

Seeing their sadness, He called out to those who had gathered, saying: “Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion towards you.” Moved by his deep compassion, he invited them to think of someone in need and to minister to him or her: “Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither.”¹

His clear and sweet command was for one person to bring one other person to him. It was not just an invitation to visit, but to actually “Bring them hither.” Jesus continued: “Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them.”² His repeated invitation was for one to take one to the Savior.

The Nephites did exactly as He invited them to do: “it came to pass that . . . all the multitude . . . did go forth with their sick and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and with all them

that were afflicted in any manner.” The scripture records that the Savior “did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him.”³ Note that they were healed only after they were brought to the Savior, that is, only after one took another to the Lord. There were many in those days who needed the Savior’s healing touch—and there are many now.

If we bring our fellow members of the Church to Him one by one,



The scripture records that the Savior “did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him.” They were healed only after they were brought to the Savior.

He will heal and strengthen each in every way that matters in time and eternity.

Bringing another person to the Savior is called ministering. We bring another person to the Savior by loving that person, praying for him or her, and helping that person to learn the word of God from the scriptures. We bring another person to the Lord by mourning with one that is mourning, serving a person in need, and taking that individual with us to sacrament meeting. We minister by bringing one to participate in all of the ordinances of the gospel (especially those of the temple) and helping him or her to keep the covenants associated with the ordinances. By doing these things, we bring the one who we are helping to the Savior so that He can bless that person.

We promised the Lord we would minister one to another when we joined the Church and were baptized: “As ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort”⁴



“A hallmark of the Lord’s true and living Church will always be an organized, directed effort to minister to individual children and God and their families. Because it is His Church, we as His servants will minister to the one, just as He did. We will minister in His name, with His power and authority, and with His loving-kindness.”

—President Russell M. Nelson



When we keep this baptismal covenant, He always keeps His promise to send His Spirit to always be with us.⁵

To have always have His Spirit with us is the greatest blessing we

can receive, for the Holy Ghost will guide us to all truth, will bring Heaven’s comfort, will sanctify us, and will give us the strength we need in both spiritual and temporal things. Too many people say, “I will minister to someone else once I have enough money and more time to do it.”

Others say, “I will think about helping others after God blesses me with more things.” To think like this is to put things in the wrong order. The key to success now and in eternity is to put the Lord first. We are to show Him by our actions that we truly love him more than anything else. So, we

keep the covenants we have made with Him. Inasmuch as we do so, we enable Him to bless us in His time, in His way.

We are organized in the Church to help each of us as members of the Church to minister one to another—as well as to those not of our faith. We are organized so that one who is “strong in the Spirit [will] take with him him that is weak, that he may be edified in all meekness, that he may become strong also.”⁶ The elders quorums and Relief Societies, the youth Aaronic Priesthood quorums and Young Women classes should be organized to help members minister one to another, so that one takes one to the Lord.

The leadership of the Adenta 1st Ward of the Accra Ghana Adenta Stake is making an organized effort to help the members minister one to another. Just a few months ago, after viewing the Area Plan broadcast and hearing President Nelson’s charge, they decided to identify: (1) who will take whom to receive the next saving ordinance; (2) who will help whom to take a name to the temple; and (3) who will take whom to sacrament meeting.

In their ward council, they asked each other: “Who will take whom to receive the next saving ordinance?” The Relief Society and elders quorum presidencies identified six couples to be sealed and assigned ministering brothers and sisters to take them with them to the temple. As a result, two

couples have received their endowment and are sealed together and to their families. The other four couples are progressing and soon will enter the temple. They also identified eleven persons to prepare for the endowment, and three of them have now received the endowment and the seven others are preparing well. I saw them as they were preparing to enter the temple and their faces shone with joy.

They asked themselves, “Who will help whom take a name to the temple?” They identified recent converts and youth and assigned their ward family history consultants to work closely with the new converts, and they organize a monthly trip to the Ghana Accra Temple to do baptisms for the dead.

They also asked themselves “Who will take whom to sacrament meeting?” They are working with the full-time missionaries for the members and missionaries to coordinate so that members will take a nonmember to sacrament meeting. They could also have an active member family bring another member family to sacrament meeting.

Their bishop testifies: “I know from the bottom of my heart that the gospel is restored and that leaders of the Lords’ Church are called of God. And if we sustain them by obeying their counsel we will find joy, peace and happiness in our individual lives and

families.” His first counselor stated: “The joy I saw in the faces of Brother and Sister Tsiagbe and Bro and Sis Sedzro even as I sat in the sealing room of the Accra Ghana Temple was indescribable. The joy of sealing under the priesthood is indeed a testament of the restored gospel.”

It is important for us as a people to minister in the Lord’s way, one taking one to the Lord. An essential key to make this happen is to participate regularly in a ministering interview with a member of the elders quorum presidency, or the Relief Society presidency. The ministering interview is a time that we sit in council and receive the revelation we need to help us minister as the Savior would to individuals!

Brothers and sisters, are you ministering, one to another, one taking one to the Savior? Are you participating in ministering interviews? I promise that if you do, you will come to know the Savior and receive a greater portion of His Spirit.

The Nephites who accepted the Savior’s invitation to bring someone in need to Him learned that it is those who minister to another person that draw closest to the Savior: “And they did all, both they who had been healed and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him.”⁷ You will notice that both the whole and the once-infirm together ended up at the Savior’s feet!

This is what the Lord and our living prophet want us to do: to come to know the Savior. They know that as we bring another person to Christ, we will both draw closer to Him and come to know Him.

President Russell M. Nelson has stated: “A hallmark of the Lord’s true and living Church will always be an organized, directed effort to minister to individual children and God and their families. Because it is His Church, we as His servants will minister to the one, just as He did. We will minister in His name, with His

power and authority, and with His loving-kindness.”⁸

May we minister to one another, one taking one on the covenant path to the temple is my prayer and desire. As we do this, we will experience the Lord’s hand being manifest in our lives individually and as a people. ■

NOTES

1. See 3 Nephi 17:5–7.
2. 3 Nephi 17:7.
3. 3 Nephi 17:9.
4. Mosiah 18:8–9.
5. Mosiah 18:10.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 84:106.
7. 3 Nephi 17:10.
8. Russell M. Nelson, “Ministering with the Power and Authority of God,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2018, 69.

priesthood leaders in the town, they quickly gathered at the local branch building to counsel together and ask the Lord to help them.

Elder James Dalton, who along with his wife Pam, had just arrived in Abomosu six weeks earlier as MLS missionaries, were among the eight priesthood leaders who met in the local branch building to discuss the situation.

After pleading with the Lord to protect the people and to guide them in responding to the danger, they quickly developed their plan: first, they needed to account for all the members of the branch; second, they needed to take inventory of the food sources that were available to them; and third, they needed to distribute the food according to the needs of each family. As they discussed feeding the local members, they quickly realized they could not ignore their nonmember neighbors and friends, so they were added to the distribution list as well.

Their plan was quickly passed on by cell phone to the other branch presidents in surrounding villages. The goal was to locate every member and identify food sources and report back in two hours.

Within two hours, the priesthood leaders reported back. In Abomosu, all but three members of the branch had been accounted for (they were later found and rescued). The report

CHURCH HISTORY COLUMN

A Miracle in Abomosu

Elder McCullough and Sister Christensen

AWA Church History Missionaries

In July 2011, the Atiwa District in Ghana experienced an unusual amount of rain. After a day or two, and without warning, the local rivers overflowed their banks and flooded the countryside. This deluge of water turned the village of Abomosu into an island, as well as the adjacent villages of Asunafo and Sankubenase. The flood not only isolated these villages, but also flooded their farms and swept away most of their crops.

For the small branches of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, these were perilous times. Their main supply of food was gone, many homes were flooded, and some were cut off from their families and loved ones.

Seth Oppong, President of the Abomosu District, was in Abomosu when the river flooded, cutting him off from his village of Asunafo and his small family. As the extent of the danger began to dawn on him and other

was that there was not much food available. Some members had food storage and were willing to share.

Stephen Abu, the former district president and current stake patriarch, had a field of corn near Abomosu that was located high enough to avoid the flood waters. He told the district president that the corn was not ready for harvest, but they were welcome to take whatever they needed. Two young missionaries and several members were given the keys to Elder Dalton's truck and told to fill the truck with corn. When the missionaries returned, the back of the truck and the back seat of the truck were completely filled with corn. They spent the rest of the day, driving through the village, handing out corn to members of the Church and their neighbors.

That night the priesthood leaders met again. They had enough corn to feed the village for a couple of days, but how would they be able to feed them after that? They knelt and prayed that the Lord would help them find a way to keep the people from starving.

The next morning, another member of the Church came forward and said that they had some corn that they were drying to be ground into meal. It was not completely dry, but they could have it to help feed the people. Those who had food storage continued to help those in need. Several days later, the two young missionaries and several local members went back

to the small corn field of Stephen Abu to see if they could find any more corn that could be picked. Because the flood waters were so high, they needed rafts to get to the farm and bring the corn back. No one expected much, but when the missionaries returned, they had another load of corn. This little miracle continued four or five times until they were able to find additional sources of food, some of which came from friends and relatives and the Church in Accra.

In talking about the flood and the efforts made to take care of the people in Abomosu, Brother Abu said, "Isn't the Lord wonderful! The more you give, the more he gives back." Both Brother Abu and President Oppong referenced the Savior in feeding the 5,000 as they reflected on how the Lord had preserved them.

LOCAL NEWS

CULTURAMA: A Cultural Event to Unite Members in the Abidjan Toit Rouge Stake, Ivory Coast

The Toit Rouge Stake Presidency of Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, launched a cultural event known as Culturama in August 2018 at the Toit Rouge Stake Center. The organizing committee

Elder Dalton reflected on the words of the Prophet Elijah to the widow of Zarephath, "make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail . . .

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days." (1 Kings 17:13–15)

The Lord is constantly working miracles around us, but we don't always recognize them at the time. Keeping a journal of our lives and recording the activities of our wards and stakes, provides us with opportunities to reflect and see the hand of the Lord in our lives, and how much He blesses us day to day. ■

comprised the stake presidency, bishoprics and stake officers.

Elder Dekaye, Area Seventy, was present and presided over the launch of the ceremony. In his opening

remarks, Brother Konan Amani Aime Christian, second counselor in the stake presidency and president of the organising committee said the objective is to “bring all members together on one hand and unite members and leaders on the other hand.”

A member of the organizing staff, Brother Zoh Didier, said that Culturama is a set of wholesome games and entertainment that includes cultural activities, sports, board games and Scripture knowledge and Church History Competition. He added that this program will take place throughout the vacations and will bring together all seven wards in the stake.

Elder Dekaye congratulated the initiative and organization of such a cultural event within a stake. He also helped the congregation to see the link between Moses 1:39 and Culturama. He then encouraged everyone not to procrastinate what we can do now, but rather to take actions like these and rejoice, because that is the purpose of life. He said that we can do this by using the “five-second” technique, that is, counting to five and getting up to do what we have to do. “In this way, we will overcome everything in life and accomplish greater things.” After that, he asked the whole congregation to stand up and practice this right away. Everyone got up and shouted for joy as they jumped after five seconds. Finally, he encouraged everyone to continue to socialize in

Zion, after which he officially opened the event.

To close the ceremony, there was a parade of all the seven wards on the podium, each with its own flag and logo and the presentation of the different trophies and medals.

The first competitions began on the same August 4 after the opening ceremony and continued every Wednesday and Saturday until September 15, 2018, the day of the final contests and the closing ceremony of the first Culturama.

On that day, both members and investigators in the stake, as well as members of other stakes, rushed to the stake center at 8 a.m. to attend the final contests in the various disciplines.

Before starting the competitions, the stake president took the opportunity

to congratulate all the members for their mobilization in the first edition of Culturama. He then encouraged the ward leaders and everyone to be more involved for the upcoming year. He pleaded for fair play and tolerance during the competitions.

There was joy and enthusiasm on everyone’s face. There were all age groups: children, youth and adults as well as the elderly. Some were dancing, while others came to support their various wards that qualified for the final. The first competitions of the day were basketball, athletics, and football.

At the end of the ceremony, everyone was really happy to meet again, and we could see the unity and closeness the Toit Rouge Stake Presidency had hoped for. ■

Finalists and winners of the various Culturama 2018 competitions:

- Basketball (Nouveau Quartier 1st Vs Attecoube): **winner → Attecoube**
- Athletics 4 x 100 m relays (Nouveau Quartier 2nd, Attecoube, Sante, Abobodoume): **winner → Nouveau Quartier 2nd**
- Athletics 100 m sprint (Sante, Attecoube, Toit Rouge 1st, Nouveau Quartier 2) : **winner → Sante**
- Football (Nouveau Quartier 2nd Vs Kote): **winner → Kote**
- Scrabble (Attecoube Vs Sante): **winner → Attecoube**
- Draughts (Toit Rouge 1st Vs Sante): **winner → Sante**
- Awale (Attecoube Vs Sante): **winner → Sante**
- Scripture and Church History (Toit Rouge 1st Vs Attecoube): **winner → Toit Rouge 1st**
- Choir Competition (All Wards) : **winner → Toit Rouge 1st**

LATTER-DAY VOICES

Miracles in Our Lives

Oranye, Chukwunedum Paul

Rukpokwu Ward, Port Harcourt
Nigeria North Stake

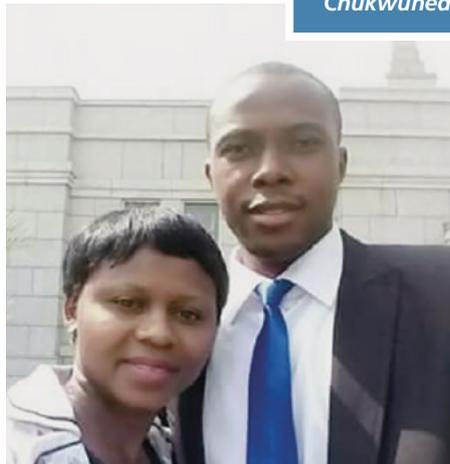
Miracles happen. I see miracles all around me every day! I know it is a manifestation of God's love for me, my family and all His children.

When I met my wife, Pamela, she was the only member of the Church in her family. When we decided to get married, something seemed an obstacle. I had no money to get all the items listed by her father as requirements for her bride price.

I was a graduate with no job. The little I made from odd jobs here and there was barely enough. I lived in my Father's house at the time. Faced with these challenges, Pamela and I fasted and prayed to Heavenly Father for help. I knew the Lord through His prophets and apostles have counseled that "young people should follow the Lord's pattern of marriage in the temple without waiting for the payment of a bride price" (Dallin H. Oaks, "The Gospel Culture, *Ensign*, March 2012, 45). But Pamela's father was not a member of the Church and saw this practice as proper traditional rites for marriage. After counseling with the Bishop, I decided to make a move. I love Pamela and wanted to obey the Lord's commandment to marry in the



Brother and Sister Oranye,
Chukwunedum Paul



temple. But I did not want to do that without the consent of her parents.

After a difficult and trying period, with the help of other, I began to get offers to paint buildings. After three painting jobs, I gathered the little I had, called on my family and travelled to Pamela's village. Still, things seemed difficult and the marriage seemed impossible. Despair, melancholy and anger almost took over my faith, but the encouraging words of the leaders and the scriptures kept me focused

and continue to trust in the Lord.

We were married traditionally on 13 February, 2016, wedded on 2 April and Sealed in Aba Nigeria Temple on 5 April in the same year. It felt like a dream to us. The Lord raised people who offered to help us with one thing or the other. The Lord literally made it happen. That experience is etched in our memories as one the many of the Lord's miracles in our lives, a manifestation of His tender mercies towards us.

We have been joyfully married for almost three years now in the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Passing through that experience and hearing the word of the Lord concerning bride price has made us realize that the Lord is not pleased

with such practices. My wife and I have decided to obey the Lord. If He blesses us with daughters, we will not demand bride price nor anything similar to it during their marriage. We will give our consent and blessings and guide them to the temple to be sealed

for time and eternity as the prophets has counseled. I see this commandment as a blessing to us in Africa. I have learnt that when we trust in the Lord and obey His commandments, He would flood miracles into our individual and family lives. ■

MISSIONARY MOMENTS

The Book of Mormon kept me going

Elder Nartey

Nigeria Benin City Mission

On October 5, 2017, a year and two months into my mission was the day I received news from my mission president that my mom had passed on the day before. The pain I felt was beyond explanation, I was tempted to tell my mission president that I wanted to go home. My mission president and wife, being the loving parents they are, asked that I stay with them a few days at the mission home with hopes that I would be comforted.

In the course of my stay, my mission president gave me a priesthood blessing and I was prompted to revisit some of the scriptures my mission president had expounded during one of our zone conferences on the plan of salvation and so I did. I read Alma 42:6 that reminded me that death is inevitable and that “it was appointed unto man to die.” I also read Alma 40:11–12 where it teaches that a

righteous soul who crosses the veil will be in a state of rest and peace.

As I read, I felt my pain waning gradually and I continued to read it repeatedly. I was reminded that my mom was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who had gone through the ordinances of baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost by my hand two years before her passing. That reminder kept me going and I left the mission home the next day to return to proselyting.

As I kept teaching the plan of salvation to my investigators from the Book of Mormon, my joy knew no bounds. Thanks to the Book of Mormon, I have moved on and am almost done with my mission. I am more than grateful for the principles taught in the Book of Mormon indeed, it contains the fullness of the gospel, for I have received a witness of its truthfulness. ■

CALL FOR ARTICLES

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AfricaWestWebsite@ldschurch.org ■

