

ASIA LOCAL PAGES

ASIA AREA LEADER MESSAGE

Ministering Interviews

By Elder Ting Tsung Chang

Area Seventy



Elder Ting Tsung Chang

In April 2018, President Russell M. Nelson announced, “We will implement a newer, holier approach to caring for and ministering to others. We will refer to these efforts simply as ‘ministering.’”¹ We appreciate that we can be guided and inspired by continuous revelation in this mortal life. Ministering is learning of, and attending to, others’ needs. It is doing the Lord’s work. It is our privilege to represent Jesus Christ and to act as His agents to watch over, lift, and strengthen those around us. And in return, when we minister to the spiritual and temporal needs of others in the Savior’s way, we will be fortified.

During the past months, I have observed many faithful members proactively and enthusiastically ministering to others. In many wards and branches, ministering interviews are also being conducted effectively between ministering brothers and their priesthood quorum leader, and ministering sisters and their Relief Society leader. Ideally, both ministering companions participate in person in the ministering interview. When meeting in person each time is impractical, some interviews may be held by phone, online, or so forth.

Ministering interviews are held at least once per quarter, and priesthood quorum and Relief Society leaders can interview ministering companionships as often as needed.²

As President Russell M. Nelson has explained, the purpose of the ministering interview is to counsel together about the well-being of assigned families and individuals. To achieve meaningful and successful ministering, leaders should conduct inspired ministering interviews with humility, love, and faith in the Lord. Sister Li, Hui-Chih, Relief Society president of Pingtung Ward, Pingtung Taiwan Stake, once testified, “Effective ministering requires the guidance of the Holy Spirit. During ministering interviews, I can deeply feel the influence

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of the Holy Spirit working upon me. I can comprehend how God brings to pass His great work by small things.”

I acknowledge that many faithful ministering brothers and sisters have provided customized service to their assigned families and individuals. Such ministering includes: visiting in person, talking on the phone, offering service, accompanying the lonely, consoling the sick, inviting members to get together for church activities, sharing scriptures, encouraging members to pray, sharing testimonies, and so on. Miracles have occurred after ministering brothers and sisters have humbly ministered to others by providing these small and simple acts of service. The faith of members has been strengthened in the midst of anguishing trials. Less-active members have returned to activity and are attending sacrament meetings. Jobless members have found new jobs. Some families have returned to activity and received the blessings of being sealed in the temple. Young men have begun preparing for full-time missionary service, and young single adults have served as full-time missionaries. As Alma taught his son Helaman in the Book of Mormon,

Ministering and ministering interviews can help us to humbly rely on the promptings of the Holy Spirit to guide us in our service and our daily lives.

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass.”³

Elder D. Todd Christofferson taught, “It’s vital that ministering brothers and sisters have an opportunity to give an accounting of their service, how are they watching over, loving, teaching, comforting, and assisting in the Savior’s way. And vital for priesthood quorum and Relief Society leaders to become informed and then understand the circumstances and needs of those over whom they preside. But the ministering interview is more than a report.”⁴ Leaders should also counsel, teach, and minister during a ministering interview. Ministering interviews are absolutely crucial and “will be the key to the quality and success of our ministering for generations to come.”⁵

Another Relief Society President, Sister Sun, Sung Pi Hung, of Nantun Ward, Taichung South Taiwan Stake, has shared, “After holding a ministering interview with a companionship of ministering sisters, I meditated for several days about some challenges facing one of the companionship’s assigned families. I then received inspiration to recommend to our bishop that the mother of the family

be called as a Relief Society teacher.” Now that the mother has begun serving as a Relief Society teacher, her family has been blessed with more reconciliation with God. The sisters of the ward have also been blessed through her service as a teacher.

I testify that ministering and ministering interviews can help us to humbly rely on the promptings of the Holy Spirit to guide us in our service and our daily lives. Our faith in the Lord will be fortified while we are ministering to others in His way with love,

kindness, and patience. As we keep the two great commandments, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,”⁶ and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”⁷, we are promised this: “[We] shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come.”⁸ ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Ministering,” *Liahona*, May 2018, 100.
2. See “Elder Christofferson Testifies of the Power of Ministering Interviews,” [ministering resource video], at ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ministering.
3. See Alma 37:6.
4. See “Purposes of Ministering Interviews,” [ministering resource video], at ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ministering.
5. See “Elder Christofferson Testifies of the Power of Ministering Interviews.”
6. See Matthew 22:37.
7. See Matthew 22:39.
8. See Doctrine & Covenants 59:23.

LOCAL PAGES

Our Temple Experience as a Family

Girija John Thomas

Coimbatore 3rd Branch

Elder L. Lionel Kendrick of the Seventy said, “The temple is a place of holiness. It is the most sacred and holy place on earth and should be treated with the greatest degree of reverence and respect.”¹

Our journey in the everlasting gospel started as a family when we

were baptized on March 8, 2009, into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Three of us were baptized: my mother, Epsheeba John Thomas (the most caring person I know), my lovable sister, Kiruba John Thomas, and I entered in the Lord’s vineyard. We lost our father



to a fatal accident in November 2008.

Things were never the same after the death of my father, John Thomas. We later came to know the restored gospel through the missionaries. The gospel has changed our lives a lot. We have experienced many hardships and faced tough trials as a family.

Nonetheless, as we have observed to keep the Lord's commandments,

we've overcome every trial. Through the grace and mercy of our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ we stood strong. My sister Kiruba got married to Ranjith Kumar in 2010. My brother-in-law is also a member of the Church. Together, they were blessed with lovable twin boys, Janish and Jeevish, born on November 6.

It took many years of anticipation for us to enter the Lord's house. We

eagerly wanted to get sealed in the temple, so we started preparing spiritually as well as temporally. We knew that being in the temple to make covenants with the Lord would bring us added strength and fortify us for the times ahead.

We were also excited to experience all the beautiful things we had heard about the temple. It was truly all that we had hoped for and more.

Nothing compares to being in the Lord's house, where all our cares and burdens seemed to fade away. It was as Christ Himself has said, "My peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

A lot of the difficulties and struggles we went through could have stopped us from receiving temple blessings. Regardless, we held on to the iron rod and to our faith. These

became a light in our path and drew us closer to God.

We strove to be worthy through prayer and scripture study, both individually and as a family. The spirit influenced us through this preparation.

Our goal was to be sealed on the anniversary of my father's passing, November 13. Lo and behold, our expectation was manifest. Finally, we were sealed on that date. The joy

was overwhelming, our hearts were rejoicing. We have missed him so much but were comforted in knowing that he is waiting to be reunited with us on the other side. We have everything to be grateful for, especially for this gospel which reconciles us to Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, and which binds families together for eternity. ■

NOTES

1. L. Lionel Kendrick, "Enhancing our Temple Experience," *Liahona*, July 2001, 95.

LOCAL PAGES

Return Gifts

By Sayantane Saha

Kolkata Branch

I am not very keen in statistics, but as far as I know, our Kolkata Branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is one of the smallest branches in India. Despite having few members, we always have high spirits—especially at Christmas when we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

This year, however, we were upset because no missionaries were assigned here in Kolkata, as we had hoped. It was November. We had been fasting and praying

together. At last, we realized that maybe it was still not the time according to our Heavenly Father's plan and decided to have the Christmas party on Sunday, 23 December. We had limited time and many things to arrange. We prayed and started making the arrangements together. We did the shopping, visited the restaurants, invited our friends and families, and decorated the church.

On the 23rd, we started with prayer and partaking of the sacrament followed by Christmas hymns and testimonies. After that, we had games and food. The day was filled with joy and happiness and

many queries from friends about our Church. At the end of the day, though we were exhausted physically, our minds were overflowing with glorious warm feelings. I looked around and there was not a single disappointed face there. Every member seemed to be infused with new hope and courage. I quietly stood there as my mind was washed with the light of the new knowledge that we had been rewarded with many gifts on this celebration of our beloved Savior's birth. The treasured blessings of joy turned into gratitude, happiness turned into hope, and smiles turned into courage. ■

Light the World: Chennai



◀ I lost all my happiness when my daughter passed to the other side of the veil, but the Light the World program has brought so much light into my life. The Christmas tree the members decorated in my home brought immense delight to my weary soul. I feel overwhelmed. — *Sister Kanchana (Chennai Tambaram Branch)*

This is the first time we had a Christmas tree in our home. We as a family are grateful for this beautiful effort taken by our branch members to share with us the joy of Christmas by taking pains to come to our home and set up a Christmas tree. We are grateful for the gospel and the unity it brings to each of us. — *Sister Mary Ramesh (Chennai Tambaram Branch)*



◀ With tearful eyes and gladdened heart, I feel how the Light the World program has given an untold message to me that we matter to the Lord and He is mindful of His children and that is why we have inspired programs such as ministering and Light the World. My child Sowmya was so delighted when the members set up a Christmas tree at our home. — *Sister Priscilla Kali (Chennai Tambaram Branch)*

I feel so grateful for the Light the World program through which our branch members shared their joy and extended love and warmth to us and to our newborn child. I was so surprised to have a Christmas tree at home even in the days of trial. I am really grateful. — *Sister Annal Dhanalaksnmi (Chennai Tambaram Branch)* ■





Light the World: Bengaluru Stake

“Light the world!” Wow! Hearing those words excited the stake presidency into action. The church was encouraging members to once again do the 25-day Christmas program. Members were invited to do different things from December 1 to December 25.

The first day of the program saw wards and branch doing service projects. Some went to orphanages, some cleaned the surrounding community.

This cleaning project was appreciated by local police officers who said: “It is wonderful to see children involved in the cleaning and the church involved in a community project. This is welcoming.”

The Bengaluru stake choir prepared to sing in malls just like it did last year when it sang at VR Mall. This year the choir chose to sing at the Orion Mall East. This was an opportunity to light

the world with songs to glorify the birth of our Savior.

Children distributed candles with Light the World pass along cards attached to them. Four hundred candles were distributed.

Despite the chill weather, the enthusiastic crowds warmed the singers with their presence. The milling crowds stopped and listened to the songs. Some hummed, some nodded, some applauded and some just soaked themselves in the warmth of the spiritual feeling they experienced. ■



Delhi young single adults in Hyderabad for YSA/SR 2K19 Conference.



With my mom and my friend holding my mission call.

The YSA Experience

Kundan Yadav

Malviya Nagar Ward, New Delhi, India

I am Kundan Yadav, a member of the Malviya Nagar ward in New Delhi.

I was referred to the Church by my best friend, Aliza Charles, and I have been active since the first day.

I discovered that as I strive to follow all the commandments including counsel from prophets and other teachings of the church, I have felt God's love for me in my life.

I was fortunate enough to attend a young single adult conference which was held in Hyderabad. It was worth being a

part of that conference, because I believe that learning is the key to success and that this conference was a rich source of learning.

As this conference was addressed self-reliance, I learned invaluable things about the subject and below are a few:

- D&C 104:15: "And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine."
- Everything that we do in our life has spiritual aspect even our temporal life.
- A bachelor's degree course from BYU can be done from home.
- Ways to manage monthly expenses.
- Skills to get a self-reliant job.

Though this conference was based on self-reliance, but we also had a lot of fun learning. If I would be asked to rate this conference on a scale of 1 to 10, I would give it a 10/10.

I am the only Church member in my family and when I joined the Church, I never thought of going on mission, but as I continued to exercise my faith, the Lord blessed me with immense blessings, and I experienced miracles, and this gave me the courage to decide to go on a mission. I have been called to serve in the India Bengaluru mission and I reported to the Philippines missionary training center on March 7. I am looking forward to a lifetime of rich and fruitful experiences that I can pass on to my descendants. ■

Young Adult Conference Focuses on Self-reliance and Service

Sister Hurst

New Delhi

More than 300 adults from across India gathered in Hyderabad on January 17 to 19 to learn how to become more self-reliant, both temporally and spiritually.

"Our goal with this conference," said John Gutty, manager of Welfare and Self-Reliance Services, "was to teach young people the principles of

self-reliance, to encourage them to take charge of their lives, and to put themselves in a position to provide for themselves and to help others."

Activities on Thursday and Friday were held at the Marigold Hotel and included personality assessment and development, resume writing, interviewing skills, managing personal

finances, and setting and reaching educational goals. Saturday was devoted to workshops on spiritual development.

The group was diverse with as many dreams and challenges as attendees. Nagaraj Govindhraj, Naga Sai Kiran Gubbala, and Madan Govindraj all traveled from Chennai to the conference. Each found something that addressed their particular situation.

Nagaraj, 18, whose parents work as cooks, wants to go to college and plans on serving a mission. "We need to be self-reliant, to support ourselves and our families," he said, "I earn



money for my mission working as a cashier and bell boy in a hotel.”

Nagaraj found the workshop on budgeting especially helpful. “At the conference,” he said, “they taught us how to manage money, to think about what we need and how much we spend, and how to live within our means.” He added, “We also learned about how faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His commandments can create happiness and stability in our lives.”

Gubbala, 27, is a returned missionary and works as a senior process assistant in a call center. He is thinking about looking for a new job. “I realized that I need to update my resume,” he said. “I also learned what to expect in an interview and how to present myself.” Gubbala also liked learning about the spiritual aspects of self-reliance, like finding the right partner to establish a strong and stable marriage.

Madan, aged 24, is working in Bangalore. He has a diploma in computer engineering and has been doing marketing for a nongovernmental organization while studying through BYU-Pathway Worldwide, an online certificate and degree program offered through Brigham Young

University-Idaho. He hopes to eventually earn a master’s degree.

“At the conference, I learned how to go for a better job while studying and how to find jobs in sectors related to my field,” he said. “I also learned how to handle the stress of working and going to school at the same time, which was very helpful.”

Saturday’s sessions were held at the Hyderabad stake center and included presentations about missionary work, family history, institute, and choosing an eternal companion. Anjali Barunal from Delhi said, “I felt the Holy Spirit testify to me that I can do my family history and provide temple ordinances for my ancestors.” Her favorite workshop was the one on eternal marriage where she learned how important it is to date and marry a worthy priesthood holder.

Participants also learned that living a self-reliant life includes serving others. The conference ended with a blood donation drive organized in conjunction with the Indian Red Cross Society. Priya, aged 20, felt that this was a perfect way to conclude her experience in Hyderabad. “Donating blood is the best gift one can give,” she said. “I am happy to share the blessing of my good health with those in need.” ■

The Blessings of the YSA Conference

Nancy David

New Delhi, Dwarka Ward

Hello! dear brothers and sisters. I’m very grateful that I have this Church and gospel in my life. Because of this Church, I was able to attend the YSA conference in Hyderabad. I learned so many things that help me to become self-reliant.

Now I’m working in a company that pays me a good salary. This happened because of the conference. I gave my interview without fear, I explained about myself in 30 seconds. I followed the “no preaching” concept and I was selected. Because of the conference, lots of people became my good friends, and now I’m also planning to go on mission. A mission is the place where you can learn so many things and I can become self-reliant. So many things are there which I can’t explain in words, but I’m glad that I was part of this conference. Those precious memories will stay forever. ■