

President Marion G. Romney

We have just listened to Elder Paul H. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder James E. Faust, Assistant to the Twelve, and supervisor of the South America Area.

Elder James E. Faust

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

On a quiet morning last week I left my office in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and walked over to the Sao Paulo Temple site. There was a soft morning mist beginning to clear away. As I walked up the gentle rise in the street onto the site, I noted with great interest and pleasure brush being cleared away and the new pegs recently driven into the ground. These pegs in the ground mark the dimensions of a new temple soon to be erected for the glory of God and the endless blessing of his children in South America.

Growth in South America

As I stood where the entrance of the temple will be, I recalled how thirty-six years ago my companions and I landed by ship in Santos after twenty-one days at sea and went by train to Sao Paulo. There were other missionaries on the same vessel going to Argentina and Uruguay, which were the two other relatively new missions on the continent.

In all of South America there was but a mere handful of members of the Church, mostly emigrants from Europe, many of whom were converted in Europe. As I stood last week on this site where this new, special, multimillion-dollar building will stand, I recalled how difficult and unpromising the future of the Church appeared in South America thirty-six years ago. In all of our mission we had only three baptisms in one year, despite the conscientious labors of over seventy missionaries. We did not have the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, or

the Book of Mormon translated into Portuguese. We held our meetings in rooms that were small and unfit for the lofty message we were trying to teach. We often had to sweep out these rooms before meeting to remove the empty bottles and trash from the revelry of the night before. It was always difficult and often discouraging.

In comparison, last year in South America there were over 8,000 convert baptisms. There are now twenty-two stakes and seventeen missions of the Church with over 152,000 members on that vast continent; and the work has only begun. Our great first generation of South American Regional Representatives and stake and mission presidents are men of affairs, including bankers, businessmen, factory owners, and professional men. They are men of great ability and faith.

The "keys" of the Kingdom

I marveled at how through the Spirit of God this has all come about. Surely it is a fulfillment of what Jesus said to his early apostles: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 16:19.) Having seen it all from close range, I cannot doubt that this is the work of God.

What has happened in Brazil has also happened in the other countries as well. The day I was at the temple site, President McAllister of the Bolivia La Paz Mission wrote, "We are still amazed at the growth of the Church since we were here before. When we left in 1967 there were fewer than 300 members compared to our current

8,500." President Bradford, sustained yesterday as a General Authority, writes from Chile, "For as young as the Church is in Chile, I marvel at the strength and ability of many local leaders." Surely the keys of the kingdom have been given to our present prophet and to the modern apostles, even as these were given by the Savior anciently.

Last week at the temple site, after much brooding and pondering, I stepped farther back to where the inner rooms of the temple will be. The morning mist had now cleared so that in the distance I could see part of the great city of Sao Paulo. I recalled how as a young missionary I presided over the work in that city, with thirteen missionaries and about 300 members. There are now four stakes of the Church and about 100 missionaries laboring in that city. There are also neighboring stakes in Campinas and Santos.

This great progress in South America has come about largely through the sacrifice and dedication of hundreds of missionaries and their families, as well as dedicated mission presidents from the United States and Canada. This is changing. In the Brazil Porto Alegre Mission there are now 136 missionaries of which fifty-eight, or 43 percent, are native-born Brazilians. All of the four mission presidents in Argentina are native South Americans. How can anyone who has seen what I have deny that this is the work of God.

Temple work envisioned

That morning last week I walked farther on the holy temple grounds. I tried to establish from the ground pegs where the sealings will be. Already it seems to be hallowed ground. In my mind's eye I could see young couples clean and pure, hand in hand, and with smiles on their faces, many with brown skins handsomely contrasting their white clothing, who will come to this sacred spot to be married under the power of the holy priesthood of God for

time and for all eternity. It was easy to imagine the great joy of whole families who will come to that spot to be sealed and bound together under the same authority into an eternal family association through their worthiness. They will come from elevated passes and high plains of the Andes; they will come from the sea coast; they will come from the great cities. On that spot the doors will also be opened to the kingdom for those who died without an opportunity to accept the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ on this earth. In addition, worthy members will receive the ordinances relating to mankind's eternal journey and to the endless potential and development of each human soul. This has been provided by a gracious, just, and loving Father for all of mankind, and permits those who have participated in these enlightening ordinances to raise themselves to their highest potential in this life and for all eternity, with an endless association with their families in the presence of their Creator.

With this in mind and with eyes wet with tears, I remembered being told by one of our great South American stake presidents that when he comes to general conference in Salt Lake, he and his wife will have to decide which two of their five children they will bring to be sealed to them in the Salt Lake Temple. It takes forty-three *soles* to make one dollar. Now their plans have changed. They are planning to take all five children to the first temple in South America. His brother stake president in the same city has never had the privilege of being endowed and of being sealed to his wife and family in a temple.

Temple baptistry

That morning a week ago on the Sao Paulo Temple site, I walked farther back, still inside of where the temple will be. Having looked at these plans many times, I knew where I was. I have had goose pimples and felt tears almost

every time I have looked at those plans. I was now standing where the baptistry will be. Thanks to President Kimball, as in all other temples since Nauvoo it will be a font borne on the back of twelve lifelike oxen representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Here will come the children, full of the mirth and excitement of youth, to perform the sacred ordinances of vicarious baptism for those who have not had that opportunity in their lifetime. It was easy to imagine the pleasure of those coming to be baptized and the great joy of those who have waited so long for this saving ordinance in their eternal journey. I was grateful that Jesus had said to his apostles: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Contemplating all of this I could not doubt that this is the work of God upon the earth.

Day of the Lamanite

It was now time to walk on the outside of the pegs in the ground marking the dimensions of that long-awaited temple. I tried to imagine how high the front spire will be. At the same time I tried to contemplate the time when the short, stoic Indians from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay will also come to that spot and gaze up at the same spire. I wondered if some of the men might not admire the fine craftsmanship in the building and compare it with the quality of the workmanship in the walls of the sacred buildings of their forbears, still standing in Cuzco, and Machu Picchu, and many other places in South America. They had their temples also.

These descendants of the Lamanites and others are people with a great past, and with the enlightening power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, they are people with a great future. One of them was sustained yesterday as a General Authority of this church. Recently there were over 8,000 of them assembled in the Plaza de Armas in Cuzco, Peru, to hear the Lamanite Generation from Brigham Young University. Their day is coming soon.

What does this new temple soon to be built in South America mean to the people there? It means great and endless blessings. It also means great sacrifice. President Kimball said recently in Tokyo as he announced the building of the first temple in the Far East, "No temple has ever yet been built that did not require sacrifice and hard work." (Unpublished, untitled talk delivered by President Kimball, Aug. 9, 1975, p. 12) It takes many *pesos*, *escudos*, *soles*, and *cruzeiros* to make one dollar. For instance, last month the faithful members in Chile raised 1,902,178 *escudos* toward the construction of the Sao Paulo Temple, which is \$387.90.

Great challenges

The Spirit of God has been distilled and has rested mightily upon the countries in South America since the time of my youth when missionary work there was so difficult. How does the work of God go there now? Problems—there are many; challenges—they are great, but the progress is almost unbelievable. What I have said about South America can be said of many other parts of the whole world. This is a great worldwide Church, and so far we have only seen the beginning. Having seen what I have seen in South America, I cannot deny that this is the work of God. I invite any who may have doubts, but who are sincere and honest in heart, to inquire further as to what is the generating force behind this great movement. It is the power of love—the love of God, the love of family, and the love of our fellowmen. And because Jesus has again given the keys of the kingdom to a living prophet and modern apostles, this love of family and others can be as eternal as the human soul. Said Jesus to his apostles of old: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:19.)

I testify that it is by these same keys and these same powers that this marvelous work goes forward throughout all of the earth, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Marion G. Romney

We have just listened to Elder James E. Faust, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve.

The congregation and choir will now join in singing, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

After the singing, Elder Charles A. Didier, a new member of the First Quorum of Seventy, will address us.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn "Now Let Us Rejoice."

President Romney

Elder Charles A. Didier, who was sustained yesterday as a new member of the First Quorum of Seventy, will now address us.

He will be followed by Elder William R. Bradford, who also was sustained yesterday as a new member of the First Quorum of Seventy.

Elder Charles A. Didier

of the First Quorum of the Seventy

My dear brothers and sisters, I suppose that everybody knows, even if it is not yet Church doctrine, that French is the language of heaven. Yes. And if you didn't know it, I think there is still time to repent before the next conference.

My dear brothers and sisters, if I am here today, I owe it to hundreds of hands which pushed me, pulled me, helped me, sustained me to be here today; in fact, to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Message of gratitude

And what I want to share today with you is simply a message of gratitude: First to thank my wife, my dear wife, for what she has done for me, for the faith that she had in me and her constant effort to be a loving mother to two boys.

To my mother, now deceased, but who had the courage to lead the family to the Church, to see that the children of the family were taught in the principles of the gospel.

To my father, still not a member,

but for what he taught me—to always select quality in life.

To the missionaries, the missionaries who came knocking on my door to bring me the message of the restoration of the gospel, to those who taught me, who baptized me, to those with whom I had the great pleasure to work in the France-Switzerland Mission, missionaries whom I respect for their dedication, their sacrifice, and their example.

Thank you to you great people of America, for you, your fathers, and your grandfathers who gave your lives to give freedom to my country two times in forty years.

Thank you to the leaders of the Church, to the managers who have helped me to be a constant practitioner of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you also to the prophet of the Lord, President Kimball, whom I love and admire because he's here to lead us, to guide us in very difficult times.

Thank you to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for his sacrifice. Thank you to my Father in heaven who gave me the possibility to learn about the beauty of his gospel.