

Miracles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

By Elder Carlos G. Revillo Jr.
Of the Seventy

I know that His gospel can bring us hope, peace, and joy, not only now, but it will also bless countless others in future generations.

Mabuhay! I bring to you love and warm smiles from the wonderful Saints of the Philippines. This year marks 60 years since the first missionaries arrived in the islands of the Philippines. Today there are 23 missions and more than 800,000 members of the Church in 123 stakes. There are now seven temples in operation, under construction, or announced. This is truly a miracle. We are witnessing the fulfillment of the prophecy in 2 Nephi 10:21: “Great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the isles of the sea.”

This miracle is also a fulfillment of the prophecy given in a prayer by then-Elder Gordon B. Hinckley in Manila in 1961. In that prayer, Elder Hinckley stated: “We invoke Thy blessings upon the people of this land, that they shall be friendly and hospitable and kind and gracious to those who shall come here, and that many, yea, Lord, we pray that there shall be [many,] many thousands who shall receive this message and be blessed thereby. Wilt Thou bless them with receptive minds and understanding hearts, and with faith to receive, and with courage to live the principles of the gospel” (dedicatory prayer at American War Memorial Cemetery, Philippines, Apr. 28, 1961).

Beyond the many, many thousands of faithful Latter-day Saints, the miracle of the gospel has brought positive changes to the country and its people. I am a living witness of this. I was six years old when my parents joined the Church in the southern island of Mindanao. At that time, there was only one mission in the entire country and no stakes. I am eternally grateful for my parents’ courage and commitment to follow the Savior. I honor them and all the pioneers of the Church in the Philippines. They paved the way for the succeeding generations to be blessed.

King Benjamin in the Book of Mormon said: “And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the

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gospel changed and blessed the Filipino Saints, including my family. The gospel is truly the way to a happy, abundant life.

The first principle of the gospel is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Many Filipinos have a natural belief in God. It is easy for us to trust Jesus Christ and know that we can receive answers to our prayers.

The Obedoza family is a great example of this. Brother Obedoza was my branch president when I was a young man. Brother and Sister Obedoza's greatest desire was to be sealed to their family in the Manila Temple. They lived in General Santos City, 1,000 miles (1,600 km) away from Manila. For the family of nine, making the journey to the temple seemed impossible. But like the merchant man who went and sold all he had to buy one pearl of great price (see Matthew 13:45–46), this couple decided to sell their house to pay for the trip. Sister Obedoza was worried because they would have no home to return to. But Brother Obedoza assured her that the Lord would provide.

They were sealed as a family for time and all eternity in the temple in 1985. In the temple they found joy incomparable—their priceless pearl. And true to Brother Obedoza's words, the Lord did provide. On their return from Manila, kind acquaintances gave them places to stay, and they eventually acquired their own home. The Lord takes care of those who demonstrate their faith in Him.

The second principle of the gospel is repentance. Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to God for forgiveness. It is a change of mind and heart. As President Russell M. Nelson teaches, it is “doing and being a little better each day” (“We Can Do Better and Be Better,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 67).

Repentance is a lot like soap. As a young chemical engineer, I worked in a soap factory in the Philippines. I learned how to make soap and the process of how it works. When you mix oils with an alkali base and add antibacterial agents, it creates a powerful substance that can eliminate bacteria and viruses. Like soap, repentance is a cleaning agent. It allows us the opportunity to get rid of our impurities and our old debris so we are worthy to be with God, as “no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of [God]” (Alma 11:37).

Through repentance we draw upon the cleansing, sanctifying power of Jesus Christ. It is a key part of the process of conversion. This is what happened to the Anti-Nephi-Lehies in the Book of Mormon. They were Lamanites who were so completely converted that they “never did fall away” (see Alma 23:6–8). They buried their weapons of war and never took them up again. They would rather die than break that covenant. And they proved it. We know that their sacrifice brought miracles; thousands who fought against them threw down their weapons and were

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traditions. I saw this in my father when he learned of the gospel and repented. He was a heavy smoker, but he threw his cigarettes away and never touched one again. Because of his decision to change, four generations from him have been blessed.

Repentance leads us to make and keep covenants through sacred ordinances. The first ordinance of salvation and exaltation is baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. Baptism allows us to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and enter into a covenant with the Lord. We can renew this baptismal covenant every week as we take the sacrament. This too is a miracle!

Brothers and sisters, I invite you to bring this miracle into your life. Come unto Jesus Christ and choose to exercise your faith in Him; repent and make and keep the covenants found in the ordinances of salvation and exaltation. This will allow you to be yoked with Christ and receive the power and blessings of godliness (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:20).

I testify of the reality of Jesus Christ and that He lives and loves each one of us. I know that His gospel can bring us hope, peace, and joy, not only now, but it will also bless countless others in future generations. That is the reason for the beautiful and warm smiles of the Filipino Saints. It is the miracle of the gospel and the doctrine of Christ. I testify of this in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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