

our family to a much greater consecration. I am so grateful for the tremendous missionaries who served there with us and taught us that uncompromising faith will always prevail in a doubting and cynical world.

Finally, I am thankful for the good Saints and members in our home state of Florida, who have strengthened us through our many years there together.

Pledge and testimony

I have heard President Monson say, "Whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies." I know this is true, and it gives me hope looking beyond my own inadequacies. I know that when we are on the Lord's errand, he will be with us, he will strengthen us, he will build our capacities. I have experienced it. I have felt his lifting Spirit. In the months and years ahead, I will need him so very much.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson

Knowing that I might be invited to speak today, my daughter left me a kind note this morning, and at the end she added, "P.S. Don't trip." So far so good.

Serving the Lord sanctifies us

Not long after I was ordained a deacon, my bishop, Leon Walker, asked me into his office to give me an assignment. He handed me a bright key, the key to the chapel, and charged me with responsibility to help look after the building. I considered myself one of the most fortunate boys in the world to have an assignment from my priesthood president. I thought this would not be a difficult task. My home was just a one-minute bicycle ride away from the building. But I soon learned what I suppose all bishops know, and that is that everybody in the ward seems to have a key to the building. As

I pledge all that I am to this sacred calling. I promise to be teachable, and I pray that I can be sufficiently meek that the Lord can mold and strengthen my spirit to accomplish his purposes. I commit to you and to the Lord that I will consecrate myself to advancing the cause of the Restoration and to loyally following his chosen leaders.

I know that our Heavenly Father lives and that he loves each one of us. I know that Jesus is the Christ and that he lovingly offers the way to our forgiveness. I know that through the Prophet Joseph Smith the Church of Jesus Christ was restored to the earth and that the true priesthood authority of God is in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I pray that I may always be valiant in that testimony and to these eternal truths, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

soon as I had the building locked up on an evening, someone came along behind me and opened a door. As soon as I had opened a Primary classroom, some diligent soul was there behind me to lock it up again. I could hardly stay on top of that job.

But I began to learn then, as I have come to understand since, that any call, any service in our Lord's cause sanctifies us. Whether it is performed in the glare of the public eye or in a quiet corner known only to God is of no consequence. What matters is that we do serve, for by serving we keep our covenants with Deity, and in those covenants is the promise of salvation.

Thanks to family and mentors

Today I honor and express my love to those who taught me the covenants and

in so many other ways blessed my life: a noble father, a blessed mother, grandparents, great-grandparents, extended family, and mentors and friends both in and out of the Church. My children cannot yet fully understand how deeply they bless my life by their loyalty to the Savior and his gospel. I honor them for that. Those who know my Kathy have observed that I married much above myself, a conclusion I heartily agree with. Our marriage is a gratifying thing, and I have not adequate words to express my love.

“I know in whom I have trusted”

As I have agonized in recent hours over the acceptability and adequacy of my offering upon the altar of him who gave his all, it has come to me that I must focus outwardly, that as I seek the interest of his flock and lose myself in their service, his grace shall be sufficient for me. I so commit myself unreservedly.

I readily attest to the reality and greatness of our God, to his goodness and grace, to his justice and mercy, to the truth of his gospel and the power of his priesthood and the authenticity of the calling of his latter-day seers. At the outset of this ministry, I acknowledge that anything I may achieve will be by virtue of the power and the grace and the gift of God. I am not, in Isaiah’s words, “the axe [that

shall] boast itself against him that heweth therewith”; I am not the saw that shall “magnify itself against him that shaketh it” (Isaiah 10:15). With Nephi, “I know in whom I have trusted” (2 Nephi 4:19).

I am particularly gratified, and it is of great significance to me, that I may at any moment and in any circumstance approach through prayer the throne of grace, that my Heavenly Father will hear my petition, and that my Advocate, he who did no sin, whose blood was shed, will plead my cause (see D&C 45:3–5). I rely heavily on that access to God, which he gives to all his children, for he is indeed no respecter of persons, and he that asks shall receive. I so witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

We have heard from Elders Neil L. Andersen and D. Todd Christofferson, new members of the First Quorum of the Seventy. It’s wonderful to hear the testimonies of these two Brethren.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.” Sister Chieko N. Okazaki, first counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, will then speak to us.

The choir and congregation sang
“We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.”

Sister Chieko N. Okazaki

Cat’s cradle—a network of kindness

My dear brothers and sisters, aloha! Today I want to share some thoughts with you about how Christian service connects all of us in a network of kindness that is strong and beautiful. As the Apostle Paul promised the Colossian Saints, our hearts can be “knit together in love” (Colossians 2:2).

Do you see this piece of string? It’s just an ordinary piece of string—not very

interesting. When I was growing up on the big island of Hawaii, all of us kids used to keep a piece of string like this handy to play with. Now a string doesn’t look like much, but look what you can do with it!

This particular cat’s cradle pattern is called four-eyes. Do you see how complex and beautiful it is? Do you see how each part supports the other parts and is connected to them? You cannot pick one