

Holiness to the Lord in Everyday Life

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Kinasanto iti Apo iti Inaldaw a Biag

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Holiness to the Lord makes daily living sacred. It draws us closer and happier to the Lord and each other.

Our recent Gong family reunion included a fun talent show, complete with a dad jokes contest.

But this contest was unusual. On one team was Grandpa (me) and two of the grandchildren, ages 12 and 11. On the other team was an artificial intelligence (AI) program prompted by a cousin to tell dad jokes in the style of Gerrit W. Gong. Grandpa Gerrit Gong versus AI Gerrit Gong.

The grandchildren and I went first.

What do you call a dinosaur who crashes his car? Tyrannosaurus Wrecks.

AI Gerrit Gong was instructed—think like Gerrit W. Gong. Talk like him.

AI Gerrit Gong—“Here is a dad joke as if spoken by Gerrit W. Gong, embracing his warm, thoughtful, and uplifting style: Why did the humble tree make people smile? Because it was rooted in love and reached out with branches of kindness. Like that tree, we too can find strength in our roots and joy in extending kindness to others.”

Well, what do you think? That’s why they’re called dad jokes.

All around us are opportunities to laugh, delight, see with grateful eyes. Ours is a gospel of joy and holiness in everyday life. Holiness sets things apart for sacred purpose. But holiness also invites us to infuse daily living with the sacred—to rejoice in daily bread amidst this world’s thistles and thorns. To walk with the Lord, we must become holy, for He is holy, and to help us

Ti kinasanto iti Apo aramidenna a sagrado ti inaldaw a biag. Yasideg ken naragragstayo iti Apo ken iti tunggal maysa.

Ti nabiit pay a reunion-mi a sangapamiliaan a Gong ket maibilang ti naragsak a talent show, a karaman ti salip iti angaw ti ama.

Ngem di gagangay daytoy a salip. Iti maysa a team adda ni Lolo (siak) ken dua kadagiti appoko, nga agtawen iti 12 ken 11. Iti sabali a team adda programa ti artificial intelligence (AI) a nangtignay iti kasinsin a mangisarita kadagiti angaw ni tatang iti estilo ni Gerrit W. Gong. Ni Lolo Gerrit Gong bersus AI Gerrit Gong.

Immunakami kadagiti appoko.

Ania ti awagmo iti dinosaur a mangdungpar iti luganna? Tyrannosaurus Wrecks.

Nabilin ni AI Gerrit Gong—agpanunot kas Gerrit W. Gong. Agsao kas kenkuana.

AI Gerrit Gong—“Adtoy ti angaw ni tatang a kasla insao ni Gerrit W. Gong, nga aw-awatenna ti nabara, napateg, ken nabileg nga estilona: Apay a ti nanumo a kayo ti nangpaisem iti tao? Gapu ta nairamut dayta iti ayat ken dimmanon kadagiti sanga ti kinaasi. Kas dayta a kayo, makasaraktayo met iti pigsa iti ramuttayo ken rag-o iti panangted iti asi itisabali.”

Bueno, ania ti panagkunayo? Dayta ti gapu a maawaganda iti angaw ni tatang.

Amin nga aglawlawtayo dagiti gundaway nga agkatawa, agragsak, makakita nga agyaman. Addaantayo iti ebangelio ti rag-o ken kinasanto iti inaldaw a biag. Ituding ti kinasanto dagiti banag iti sagrado a panggep. Ngem awisennatayo pay ti kinasanto a sumrek iti inaldaw a biag a buyogan iti sagrado—tapno agrag-o iti inaldaw a tinapay, kas iti manna, iti baet dagiti kalunay ken

become holy, the Lord invites us to walk with Him.

We each have a story. As Sister Gong and I meet you—Church members and friends in many places and circumstances—your stories of holiness to the Lord in everyday life inspire us. You live seven Cs: communion with God, community and compassion with each other, commitment and covenant with God, family, and friends—centered in Jesus Christ.

Growing evidence highlights this striking fact: religious believers are on average happier, healthier, and more fulfilled than those without spiritual commitment or connection. Happiness and life satisfaction, mental and physical health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, close social relationships, even financial and material stability—on each measure, religious practitioners flourish.

They enjoy better physical and mental health and greater life satisfaction across all ages and demographic groups.

What researchers call “religious structural stability” offers clarity, purpose, and inspiration amidst life’s twists and turns. The household of faith and community of Saints combat isolation and the lonely crowd. Holiness to the Lord says no to the profane, no to snarky cleverness at others’ expense, no to algorithms that monetize anger and polarization. Holiness to the Lord says yes to the sacred and reverent, yes to our becoming our freest, happiest, most authentic, best selves as we follow Him in faith.

What does holiness to the Lord in everyday life look like?

Holiness to the Lord in everyday life looks like two faithful young adults, married for a year, sharing with authenticity and vulnerability gospel covenants, sacrifice, and service in their unfolding lives.

She begins, “In high school, I was in a dark place. I felt like God wasn’t there for me. One night, a text from a friend said, ‘Hey, have you read Alma 36 ever?’

siit. Tapno makipagna iti Apo, agbalintayo koma a nasantuan, ta Isu ket nasantuan; ken tulongan-natayo nga agbalin a nasantuan, awisennatayo ti Apo a makipagna Kenkuana.

Adda estoria ti tunggal maysa kadayo. iti pannakiam-ammomi ken Sister Gong kadayo—dagiti miembro ti Simbaan ken gagayem iti adu a lugar ken kasasaad—dagiti estoriayo iti kinasanto ti Apo iti inaldaw a biag ti mangparegta kadakami. Ibibiagyo ti pito a C: communion iti Dios, community ken compassion iti tunggal maysa, commitment kencovenat iti Dios, familia ken gagayem—centro ken Jesus Cristo.

Itampok ti dumakdakkal a pakakitaan toy kinapudno: dagiti mamati iti relihion ket nara-gragsak, nasalsalun-at, ken mapmapnek ngem dagiti awanan iti naespirituan a panagkumit wenno koneksion. Kinaragsak ken pannakapnek iti biag, salun-at ti panunot ken bagi, kaipapangan ken panggep, ugali ken birtud, nasinged a relasion ti kagimongan, pinansial ken material a kinatalged—iti tunggal rukod, rumang-ay dagiti agsansasay iti relihion.

Naragagsakda iti salun-at ti bagi ken panunot ken dakdakkal a pannakapnekda iti biag iti amin nga edad ken demograpiko a grupo.

Ti idiaya dagiti agsuksukisok a “natalged nga estruktura ti relihion” ket mangidiaya iti kinalawag, panggep, ken inspirasion iti baet dagiti parikut ti biag. Ti sangakabbalayan nga addaan iti pammati ken komunidad dagiti Santo ket pamekenda ti pannakaisina ken ti malmalday a bunggoy. Ti kinasanto iti Apo “saan” nga umanamong iti narugit, “saan” iti kinasikap a gastos ti sabali, “saan” iti algoritmo a mangkuarta iti pungtot ken polarisasion. Kuna ti kinasanto ti Apo “wen” iti sagrado ken naraem, “wen” iti kawayawayaantayo, kararagsakan, kaumnuan, kasayaatan a bagitayo no sumurottayo Kenkuana iti pammati.

Ania ti langa ti kinasanto iti Apo iti inaldaw a biag?

Ti kinasanto iti Apo iti inaldaw a panagbiag ket kas iti dua a young adult, a naasawaanen iti makatawen, a mangibingbinglay a napudno ken kinalaka a maapektuan kadagiti katulagan ti ebangelio, panagsakripisio, ken panagserbi iti mabuangayen a biagda.

Rugianna, “Idi haikul, addaak iti nasipnget a lugar. Nariknak a kasla awan sadiay ti Dios para kaniak. Maysa a rabii, kinuna ti text manipud iti maysa a gayyem, ‘Hey nabasam kadin ti Alma

“As I started reading,” she said, “I was overcome with peace and love. I felt like I was being given this big hug. When I read Alma 36:12, I knew Heavenly Father saw me and knew exactly how I was feeling.”

She continues, “Before we got married, I was honest with my fiancé that I didn’t have a great testimony of tithing. Why did God need us to give money when others had so much to give? My fiancé helped explain it’s not about money but following a commandment asked of us. He challenged me to start paying tithing.

“I really saw my testimony grow,” she said. “Sometimes money gets tight, but we saw so many blessings, and somehow paychecks were enough.”

Also, “in my nursing class,” she said, “I was the only member of the Church and the only one married. Many times I left class frustrated or crying because I felt classmates singled me out and made negative comments about my beliefs, my wearing my garments, or my being married so young.”

Yet she continues, “This past semester I learned how to better voice my beliefs and be a good gospel example. My knowledge and testimony grew because I was tested in my ability to stand alone and be strong in what I believe.”

The young husband adds, “Before my mission I had offers to play college baseball. Making the difficult decision, I put those offers aside and went to serve the Lord. I wouldn’t trade those two years for anything.

“Returning home,” he said, “I expected a difficult transition but found myself stronger, faster, and healthier. I was throwing harder than when I left. I had more offers to play than when I left, including my dream school. And, most importantly,” he said, “I rely upon the Lord more than ever.”

He concludes, “As a missionary I taught that Heavenly Father promises us power in our prayers, but sometimes I forget that for myself.”

Our treasury of missionary holiness-to-the-

36?’

“Idi rinugiak ti panangbasa, kinunana, “Naaddaannak iti talna ken ayat. Nariknak a naited kaniak daytoy dakkal nga arakup. Idi nabasak ti Alma 36:12, ammok a nakitanak ti Nailangitan nga Ama ken ammona no kasano ti marikriknak.”

Ituloy na, “Sakbay a nagkasarkami, napudnoak iti nobiok nga awan ti dakkal a pammaneknekko iti apagkapullo. Apay a kasapulan ti Dios a mangtedtayo iti kuarta idinto ta adu ti maited ti sabsabali? Timmulong ti nobiok a nangilawlawag a saan a maipapan iti kuarta no di ket panagtulnog iti bilin a naidawat kadakami. Kinaritnak a rugiak ti agbayad iti apagkapullo.

“Talaga a nakitak a dumakkel ti pammaneknekko,” kinunana. No dadduma agkurang ti kuarta, ngem nakakitakami iti nakaad-adu a bendision ket uray no kasano ket umdasen ti sueldo.”

Kasta met, “iti klasek iti nursing,” kinunana, “siak laeng ti miembro ti Simbaan ken ti kakaisuna a naasawaan. Namin-adu a pinanawak ti klase a maup-upay ken agsangsangit gapu ta nariknak a nakakita kaniak dagiti kaklasek ken negatibo ti masaoda maipapan iti pammatik, ti garment a suotko, ken ti panagasawak a nasapa unay.”

Ngem intuloy na, “Toy napan a semestre nasursurok ti napimpintas a panangisaok iti pammatik ken agbalin a nasayaat a pagwadan ti ebangelio. Dimmakel ti pannakaammok ken pammaneknekko gapu ta nasubok ti kabalak nga agtakder nga agmaymaysa ken natibker iti patpatiek.”

Innayon ti asawa a lalaki, “Sakbay ti missionko adda awisko nga agay-ayam iti baseball iti kolehio. Iti narigat a pangngeddengko, inikkatko dagita nga awis ket napanak nagservi iti Apo. Diakto isukat ti dua a tawen iti aniaman a banag.

“Idi nagawidak,” kinunana, “ninamnamak ti narigat a panagbalbaliw ngem nakuatak a napigpigsak, naparpartak, ken nasalsalun-atak. Napigpigsak nga agipuruak ngem idi pimmanawak. Ad-adu ti awisko nga agay-ayam ngem idi pimmanawak, agraman ti arapaapko nga eskuela. Ket, kangrunaanna,” kinunana, “ad-adda nga agpannurrayak iti Apo ngem idi.”

Inleppasna, “Kas maysa a misionario insur-ok nga ikari kadayo ti Nailangitan nga Ama ti bileg dagiti kararagtayo, ngem no dadduma malipatak dayta para iti bagik.”

Nabaknang ken napno ti gamengtayo iti

Lord blessings is rich and full. Finances, timing, and other circumstances are often not easy. But when missionaries of all ages and backgrounds consecrate holiness to the Lord, things can work out in the Lord's time and way.

Now with a 48-year perspective, a senior missionary shares, "My dad wanted me to get a college education, not go on a mission. Shortly after that, he had a heart attack and died at age 47. I felt guilty. How could I make things right with my father?"

"Later," he continues, "after I decided to serve a mission, I saw my father in a dream. Peaceful and contented, he was happy I would serve."

This senior missionary continues, "As-Doctrine and Covenants section 138 teaches, I believe my father could serve as a missionary in the spirit world. I picture my father helping our great-grandfather, who left Germany at age 17 and was lost to the family, be found again."

His wife adds, "Among the five brothers in my husband's family, the four who served missions are the ones with college degrees."

Holiness to the Lord in everyday life looks like a young returning missionary who learned to let God prevail in his life. Earlier, when asked to bless someone who was very sick, this missionary said, "I have faith; I will bless him to recover. Yet," the returning missionary says, "I learned in that moment to pray not for what I wanted but for what the Lord knew the person needed. I blessed the brother with peace and comfort. He later passed away peacefully."

Holiness to the Lord in everyday life feels like a spark arcing across the veil to connect, comfort, and strengthen. An administrator at a major university says he feels individuals he knows only by reputation praying for him. Those individuals devoted their lives to the university and continue to care about its mission and students.

A sister does her best each day, after her husband was unfaithful to her and the children. I deeply admire her and others like her. One

bendision ti kinasanto-iti-Apo kas misionario. Masansan a saan a nalaka ti pinansial, panawen, ken dadduma pay a kasasaad. Ngem no dagiti misionario iti amin nga edad ken nagtaudan ket mangikonsagrar iti kinasanto iti Apo, mabalin a maitrabaho ti bambanag iti panawen ken wagas ti Apo.

Ita nga addaan iti 48-tawen a pannirigan, ibinglay ti maysa a senior missionary, "Kayat ni tatangko a makagun-odak iti edukasion iti kolehio, saan a mapan iti mision. Di nagbayag kalpasan dayta, naatake ti pusona ket natay idi agtawen iti 47. Nariknak a nakabasolak. Kasano a mailintegko dagiti banag ken ni tatangko?"

"Idi agangay," intuloyna, "kalpasan nga inkeddengko nga agmision, natagtagainepko ni tatangko. Natalna ken kontento, naragsak isuna nga agserbiak."

Intuloy daytoy a senior missionary, "Kas isuro ti Doktrina ken Katulagan 138, patiek a makapagserbi ni tatangko kas misionario iti lubong dagiti espiritu. Iladawak ni tatangko a mangtuttulong iti lelongmi iti tumeng, a pim-manaw iti Germany idi agtawen iti 17 ken napukaw idi iti pamilia, a masarakan manen."

Innayon ti asawana, "Iti lima nga agkakabsat a lallaki iti pamilia ni lakayko, dagiti uppat a nagserbi iti mision ti nakaturpos iti kolehio."

Ti kinasanto iti Apo iti inaldaw a biag ket kasla maysa a nga agtutubo a nagsublin a misionario a nakasursuro a bay-an nga agballigi ti Dios iti biagna. Sakbayna, idi nadawat a bendisionanna ti maysa a tao a masakit unay, kinuna daytoy a misionario, "Adda pammatik; bendisionak nga umimbagto. Ngem," kuna ti nagsublin a misionario, "Nasursurok iti dayta a kanito nga ikararang saan a ti kayatko, ngem para iti ammo ti Apo a kasapulan ti tao. Binendisionak ti kabsat iti talna ken liwliwa. Pimmusay idi agangay a sitatalna."

Ti kinasanto iti Apo iti inaldaw a biag ket marikna a kasla kirmat nga agarko iti ballasiw ti belo tapno kumonekta, mangliwliwa, mangpapgisa. Kuna ti administrador iti maysa a dakkel nga unibersidad a mariknana dagiti indibidua nga am-ammona babaen laeng ti reputasion a mangikarkarag kenkuana. Dagita nga indibidua indedikarda ti biagda iti unibersidad ken agtultuloy a maseknan iti misionna ken dagiti estudianta.

Inaldaw nga aramiden ti maysa a kabsat a babai ti amin a kabaelanna, kalpasan a pinanawan ti asawana a saan a napudno kenkua-

day while folding laundry, her hand on a stack of garments, she sighed to herself, “What’s the point?” She felt a tender voice assure her, “Your covenants are with me.”

For 50 years, another sister yearned for a relationship with her father. “Growing up,” she says, “there were my brothers and my dad, and then there was me—the only daughter. All I ever wanted was to be ‘good enough’ for my dad.

“Then my mom passed away! She was my only liaison between my dad and me.

“One day,” the sister said, “I heard a voice say, ‘Invite your dad and take him to the temple with you.’ That was the beginning of a twice-a-month date with my daddy to the house of the Lord. I told my dad I loved him. He told me he loved me too.

“Spending time in the house of the Lord has healed us. My mom could not help us on earth. It took her being on the other side of the veil to help mend what was broken. The temple completed our journey to wholeness as an eternal family.”

The father says, “The temple dedication was a great spiritual experience for me and my only daughter. Now we attend together and feel our love strengthen.”

Holiness to the Lord in everyday life includes tender moments when loved ones pass. Earlier this year, my dear mother, Jean Gong, slipped into the next life days before her 98th birthday.

If you asked my mother, “Would you like rocky road, white chocolate ginger, or strawberry ice cream?” Mom would say, “Yes, please, may I taste each one?” Who could say no to your mother, especially when she loved all of life’s flavors?

I once asked Mom which decisions had most shaped her life.

She said, “Being baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and

na ken kadagiti annak. Dayawek unay isuna ken ti dadduma a kas kenkuana. Maysa nga aldaw bayat ti panagkupinna iti linabaan, adda ti imana kadagiti nabunton a garment, insennaayna iti bagina, “Ania ti serserbina?” Nariknana ti nadungngo a timek a mangipanamna kenkuana, “Adda kaniak dagiti katulagam.”

Iti 50 a tawen, tinarigagayan ti sabali pay a kabsat a babai ti pakainaiganna ken ni tatangna. Kinunana, “Iti panagdakkel, addan dagiti kakabsatko a lallaki ken ni tatangko, sa siak—ti kakaisuna nga anak a babai. Ti laeng kayatko idi ket agbalin a ‘nasingpet’ para ken tatangko.

“Kalpasanna pimmusay ni nanangko! Isu laeng ti liaison-ko iti baetmi ken ni tatangko.

“Maysa nga aldaw,” kinuna ti kabsat a babai, “nangngegko ti timek a nagkuna, ‘Awisem ni tatangmo a mapan iti templo.’ Dayta ti nangrugian ti mamindua-iti-makabulan a panagkaduami ken ni tatangko iti balay ti Apo. Imbagak ken ni tatangko nga ay-ayatek isuna. Imbagana kaniak nga ay-ayatennak met.

“Ti panangbubos iti oras iti balay ti Apo ti nangagas kadakami. Dinakami matulongan ni nanangko ditoy daga. Masapul ti kaaddana iti sabali a bangir ti belo tumulong a mangtarimaan iti narakrak. Inleppas ti templo ti panagdaliasatmi nga agturong iti pakabuklan ti agnanayon a pamilia.”

Kuna ti ama, “Ti pannakaidedikar ti templo ket maysa a naindaklan a naespirituan a padas para kaniak ken iti kakaisuna nga anakko a babai. Ita, agkakaduakami a dumar-ay ken mariknami a pumigsa ti ayatmi.”

Ti kinasanto iti Apo iti inaldaw a panagbiag iramanna dagiti nadungngo a kanito no lumabas dagiti ay-ayaten. Iti nasapsapa a paset daytoy a tawen, naglusdoy ti patpatgek nga ina, ni Jean Gong, nga agturong iti sumaruno a biag sakbay ti maika-98 a kasangayna.

No damagem ken nanangko, “Kayatmo kadi ti rocky road, white chocolate ginger, wenno strawberry ice cream?” Kuna koma ni Nanang, “Wen, pangngaasim, mabalinko kadi a ramanan ti tunggal maysa?” Siasino ti makaibaga iti saan ken ni nanangyo, nangnangruna no pagay-ayatna amin a raman ti biag?

Naminsan dinamagko ken ni Nanang no ania dagiti pangngeddeng ti kaaduan a nangsukog iti biagna.

Kinunana, “Ti pannakabuniagko a maysa a miembro ti Ti Simbaan ni Jesucristo dagiti Santo

moving from Hawaii to the mainland, where I met your father.”

Baptized as a 15-year-old, the only member of her large family to join our Church, my mother had covenant faith and trust in the Lord that blessed her life and all our family generations. I miss my mother, as you miss members in your family. But I know my mother is not gone. She is just not here now. I honor her and all who pass as valiant examples of everyday holiness to the Lord.

Of course, holiness to the Lord in everyday life includes coming more often to the Lord in His holy house. This is true whether we are Church members or friends.

Three friends came to the Bangkok Thailand Temple open house.

“This is a place of super healing,” said one.

In the baptistry, another said, “When I am here, I want to be washed clean and never sin again.”

The third said, “Can you feel the spiritual power?”

With nine sacred words, our temples invite and proclaim:

“Holiness to the Lord.

“The House of the Lord.”

Holiness to the Lord makes daily living sacred. It draws us closer and happier to the Lord and each other and prepares us to live with God our Father, Jesus Christ, and our loved ones.

As did my friend, you may wonder if your Heavenly Father loves you. The answer is a resounding, absolute yes! We can feel His love as we make holiness to the Lord ours each day, happy and forever. May we do so, I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

iti Ud-udina nga Aldaw ken yaakar manipud Hawaii a mapan iti mainland, a nakaam-ammua ken tatangmo.”

Nabuniagan kas maysa nga agtawen iti 15, ti kakaisuna a kameng ti dakkel a pamiliana a nakikadua iti Simbaanmi, addaan ni nanangko iti katulagan a pammati ken panagtalek iti Apo a nangbendision iti biagna ken amin a kaputotan ti pamilyami. Mailiwak ken ni nanangko, kas iti pannakailiwm kadagiti miembro iti pamilyam. Ngem ammok a saan a pimmanaw ni nanangko. Awan laeng isuna ditoy ita. Padayawak isuna ken amin a lumabas kas maingel a pagwadan ti inaldaw a kinasanto iti Apo.

Siempre, ti kinasanto iti Apo iti inaldaw a biag iramanna ti masansan a yaay iti Apo iti nasantuan a balayna. Pudno daytoy miembrotayo man iti Simbaan wenno gagayem.

Tallo nga aggayem ti immay iti open house ti Bangkok Thailand Temple.

“Daytoy ket lugar ti pannakapaimbag,” kinuna ti maysa.

Iti baptistry, kinuna ti sabali, “No addaak ditoy, kayatko ti mabugguan a nadalus ken saanen nga agbasol.”

Kinuna ti maikatlo, “Mariknam kadi ti naespirituan a bileg?”

Babaen ti siam a sagrado a balikas, dagiti templotayo ket mangawis ken mangiwaragawag:

“Kinasanto iti Apo.”

“Ti Balay ti Apo.”

Ti kinasanto iti Apo aramidenna a sagrado ti inaldaw a biag. Iyasideg ken naragragsaknatayo iti Apo ken iti tunggal maysa ken isagananatayo nga agbiag a kadua ti Dios Amatayo, ni Jesucristo, ken dagiti ay-ayatentayo.

Kas iti inaramid ti gayyemko, mabalin a panunotem no ay-ayatennaka ti Nailangitan nga Amam. Umaw-aweng ti sungbat a wen! Mari-knatayo ti ayatna bayat ti panangaramidatayo iti kinasanto iti Apo a kumatayo iti inaldaw, naragsak ken agnanayon. Sapay koma maaramidatayo daytoy, ikararagko iti sagrado a nagan ni Jesucristo, amen.