

“Draw Near unto Me”

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“Manakaikeza Ahy”

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Mpanolotsaina Faharoa ao amin'ny Fiadidiana Voalohany

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Jesus Christ loves each of us. He offers us the opportunity to draw closer to Him.

My dear brothers and sisters, it is a joy for me to be with you in this general conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is His Church. We are gathered in buildings and homes all over the world in His name.

We take His name upon us when we enter His kingdom by covenant. He is the resurrected and glorified Son of God. We are mortals, subject to sin and death. Yet, in His love for each of us, the Savior invites us to come closer to Him.

Here is His invitation to us: “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

There are times we feel close to the Savior Jesus Christ. And yet, sometimes during our mortal trials, we feel some distance from Him and wish for an assurance that He knows what is in our hearts and loves us as individuals.

The Savior’s invitation includes the way to feel that assurance. Draw near Him by always remembering Him. Seek Him diligently through scripture study. Ask through heartfelt prayer to Heavenly Father to feel closer to His Beloved Son.

Tia antsika tsirairay avy i Jesoa Kristy. Manome antsika fahafahana hanakaiky kokoa Azy Izy.

Ry rahalahiko sy anabaviko malala isany, fifaliana ho ahy ny miaraka aminareo amin’ity fihaonambe maneran-tany an’ Ny Fiangonan’i Jesoa Kristy ho an’ny Olomasin’ny Andro Farany ity. Fiangonany ity. Mivory ao amin’ireo trano sy tokantrano manerana ireo tontolo izao amin’ny anarany isika.

Mitondra ny anarany eo amintsika isika rehefa miditra ny fanjakany amin’ny alalan’ny fanekehampihavanana. Izy Ilay Zanak’ Andriamanitra nitsangana tamin’ny maty sy notafiana voninahitra. Mety maty isika ary iharan’ny fahotana sy ny fahafatesana. Kanefa, noho ny fitiavany antsika tsirairay avy dia manasa antsika ny Mpamonjy mba hanakaiky kokoa Azy.

Toy izao ny fanasany ho antsika: “Manakaikeza Ahy dia hanakaiky anareo Aho; tadiavo fatratra Aho dia hahita Ahy ianareo; mangataha dia hahazo ianareo; dondòny dia hovahana ianareo.”

Misy fotoana ahatsapantsika ho akaiky an’i Jesoa Kristy Mpamonjy. Kanefa, indraindray mandritra ny fiainantsika eto an-tany, dia mety hahatsapa ho lavitra kely Azy koa isika ary maniry hahazo toky fa mahafantatra izay ao am-pon-tsika sy tia antsika tsirairay Izy.

Tafiditra ao anatin’ny fanasana omen’ny Tompo ny fomba hahatsapana izany fanomezan-toky izany. Manakaikeza Azy amin’ny alalan’ny fahatsiarovana Azy mandrakariva. Katsaho amim-pahazotoana Izy amin’ny alalan’ny fandalinana soratra masina. Mangataha amin’ny alalan’ny vavaka avy amin’ny fo amin’ny Ray any An-danitra mba hahatsapa ho akaiky kokoa ny Zanany Malalany.

There is a simple way to think about it. It is what you would do if you were separated for a time from dear friends. You would find a way to communicate with them, you would cherish any message you received from them, and you would do all you could to help them.

The more that happened, the longer it lasted, the deeper the bond of affection would be strengthened, and you would feel yourself drawing ever nearer. If much time passed without the cherished communication and the opportunity to help one another, the bond would weaken.

Jesus Christ loves each of us. He offers that opportunity to draw closer to Him. As with a loving friend, you will do it in much the same way, by communicating through prayer to Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ, listening for cherished guidance from the Holy Ghost, and then serving others for the Savior cheerfully. Soon you would feel that blessing of drawing nearer to Him.

In my youth, I experienced the joy of coming closer to the Savior—and of His coming closer to me—through simple acts of obedience to the commandments. When I was young, the sacrament was offered during an evening meeting. I can still remember one specific night, more than 75 years ago, when it was dark and cold outside. I remember a feeling of light and warmth as I realized that I had kept the commandment to gather with the Saints to partake of the sacrament, covenanting with our Heavenly Father to always remember His Son and keep His commandments.

At the end of the meeting that night, we sang the hymn “Abide with Me; ’Tis Eventide,” with the memorable words “O Savior, stay this night with me.”

These words brought an overwhelming sense of the Spirit to me, even as a young boy. I felt the Savior’s love and closeness that evening through the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Misy fomba tsotra hieritreretana izany. Izany no zavatra ho nataonao raha toa ka tafasaraka amin’ny namana tiana iray mandritra ny fotoana iray ianao. Hitady fomba hiresahana aminy ianao, hankamamy ny hafatra rehetra izay voarainao avy aminy, ary hanao izay rehetra azonao atao ianao mba hanampy azy.

Arakaraka ny nitrangan’izany no mampaharitra izany sy nampalalim-paka ny tanjaky ny fatoran’ny fitiavana misy eo aminareo, ary hahatsapa ho mifanakaiky kokoa noho ny hatrizay ianareo. Raha naharitra ny fotoana tsy nisian’ily fifandraisana nankamamiana sy ilay fahafahana hifanampy, dia hihagoragora ilay fatorana.

Tia antsika tsirairay avy i Jesoa Kristy. Manome antsika izany fahafahana hanakaiky kokoa Azy izany Izy. Tahaka izay ho nataon’ny namana be fitiavana iray, dia hanao izany amin’ny fomba mitovy be amin’izany ianao, amin’ny alalan’ny fifandraisana amin’ny alalan’ny vavaka amin’ny Ray any An-danitra amin’ny anaran’i Jesoa Kristy, ny fihainoana mba hahazoana fitarihana tena tiana avy amin’ny Fanahy Masina, ary ny fanompoana ny hafa am-pifaliana ho an’ny Mpamonjy. Vetivety ianao dia hahatsapa izany fitahiana avy amin’ny fanakaikhezana Azy kokoa izany.

Tamin’ny fahatanorako aho dia niaina ilay fifaliana avy amin’ny fanakaikhezana ny Mpamonjy sy avy amin’ny fanakaikhezany ahy, amin’ny alalan’ny fihetsika tsotra maneho fankatoavana ireo didy. Mandritra ny fivoriana hariva no fandraisana ny fanasan’ny Tompo fony aho mbola kely. Mbola tsaroako ilay alina iray manokana, efa ho 75 lasa izay, izay maizina sy nangatsiaka tamin’izay. Tsaroako ilay fahatsapana fahamaivana sy hafanana teo amim-pahatsiarovako fa nitandrina ilay didy ny hiangona miaraka amin’ireo Olomasina aho mba handray ny fanasan’ny Tompo, nanao fanekempihavanana tamin’ny Raintsika any An-danitra ny hahatsiaro ny Zanany mandrakariva ary ny hitandrina ny didiny.

Nihira ny “Demeure auprès de moi, Seigneur” izahay tamin’ny faran’ily fivoriana tamin’io takariva io, niaraka tamin’ily tonony tsy hay hadinoina hoe: “Tompo o, mitoera eto amiko fa hariva izao.”

Nahatsapako ny Fanahy tamin’ny fomba nahery vaika ireo toniny ireo, na dia mbola zazalahy kely aza aho. Nahatsapa ny fitiavan’ny Mpamonjy sy ny fanakaikhezany ahy aho tamin’io

Years later I wanted to rekindle the same feeling of the Savior's love and the closeness I had felt to the Lord during that sacrament meeting in my youth. So I kept another simple commandment: I searched the scriptures.

In the book of Luke, I read of the third day after His Crucifixion and burial, when faithful servants had come, out of love for the Savior, to anoint His body. When they arrived, they found the stone rolled away from the tomb and saw that His body was not there.

Two angels stood by and asked why they were afraid:

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?”

“He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

“Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.”

That evening at dusk, two disciples walked from Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus, and the resurrected Lord appeared to them and walked with them.

The book of Luke allows us to walk with them that evening:

“And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

“But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

“And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

“And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?”

They told Him of their sadness that Jesus had died when they had trusted He would be the Redeemer of Israel.

There must have been affection in the risen

hariva io, tamin'ny alalan'ny fampiononan'ny Fanahy Masina.

Taona maro taty aoriana dia te hamelona indray ireo fahatsapana ny fitiavan'ny Mpamonjy sy ny naha-akaiky Azy aho, izay tsapako nandritra izany fivoriana fanasan'ny Tompo tamin'ny fahatanorako izany. Ka noho izany dia nankatò didy tsootra iray hafa aho: Nandalina ny soratra masina aho.

Ao amin'ny bokin'i Lioka, dia namaky momba ilay andro fahatelo taorian'ny Fanomboana sy ny fandevenana Azy aho, rehefa tonga hanosotra zava-manitra ny vatany ireo mpanompo mahatoky noho ny fitiavany ny Mpamonjy. Nony tonga izy ireo, dia hitany fa efa voakodia niala tamin'ny fasana ny vato, ary hitany fa tsy tao ny fatiny.

Nisy anjely roa nijoro teo ary nanontany ny antony nampatahotra azy ireo:

“Nahoana no ato amin'ny maty no itadiananareo ny velona?

“Tsy ato Izy, fa efa nitsangana; tsarovy ny teny izay nataony taminareo, fony Izy mbola tany Galilia,

“Ka niteny hoe: Ny zanak'olona tsy maintsy atolotra eo an-tanan'ny mpanota, ka hohomboana amin'ny hazofijaliana ary hitsangana amin'ny andro fahatelo.”

Io hariva io, rehefa maizimbava vilany, dia nisy mpianatra roa nandeha an-tongotra avy any Jerosalema tamin'ny lalan'i Emaosy, ary niseho tamin'izy ireo ny Tompo efa nitsangana tamin'ny maty ka nandeha niaraka tamin'izy ireo.

Mamela antsika handeha hiaraka amin'izy ireo tamin'io hariva io ny filazantsaran'i Lioka:

“Ary raha mbola niresaka sy niara-nisaina izy, dia nanatona i Jesoa ka niaraka taminy.

“Nefa ny mason'ireo nohazonina mba tsy hahafantarany Azy.

“Ary hoy Izy taminy: Ahoana izao teny resahinareo ety am-pandehanana izao? Dia nijanona ireo sady nalahelo tarehy.

“Ary ny anankiray, izay atao hoe Kleopasy, namaly ka nanao taminy hoe: Ianao irery va no vahiny mitoetra any Jerosalema tsy mba mahalala izay zavatra tonga tao tamin' izao andro izao?”

Nilaza Taminy ny alahelony izy ireo fa maty i Jesoa rehefa nahatoky izy ireo fa Izy no ho ilay Mpanavotra an'i Isiraely.

Tsy maintsy ho nisy fanehoam-pitiavana tao

Lord's voice as He spoke to these two sorrowful and mourning disciples.

As I continued to read, there came these words that warmed my heart, just as I had felt when I was a little boy:

"And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

"But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them."

The Savior accepted that night the invitation to enter the house of His disciples. He sat at meat with them. He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. Then He vanished out of their sight.

Luke recorded for us the feelings of those blessed disciples: "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

The two disciples then rushed back to Jerusalem to tell the eleven Apostles what had happened. As they were sharing their experience, the Savior appeared again.

He stood in the midst of them and "saith unto them, Peace be unto you." He then reviewed the prophecies of His mission to atone for the sins of all His Father's children and to break the bands of death.

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

"And ye are witnesses of these things."

Just as His beloved disciples, every child of Heavenly Father who has chosen to enter through the gate of baptism is under covenant to be a witness of the Savior and to care for those in need throughout our mortal lives. This commitment was made plain for us by the great Book of Mormon prophet Alma centuries ago at the Waters of Mormon:

amin'ny feon'ny Tompo efa nitsangana tamin'ny maty rehefa niresaka tamin'ireto mpianatra nalahelo sy nidonam-pahoriana ireto.

Rehefa nanohy ny famakiako aho dia tonga tamin'ireo andian-teny ireo izay nanafana ny foko, toy ilay fahatsapana nananako fony aho mbola zazalahy kely:

"Ary efa mby teo akaikin'ny vohitra izay efa halehan'izy roa lahy izy, ary Jesoa toa nanao han-deha lavitra kokoa.

"Fa ireo nanery Azy ka nanao hoe: Mitoera aty aminay; fa efa ho hariva izao, ka lasan-davitra ny andro. Dia niditra hitoetra tao aminy Izy."

Nanaiky ny fanasana mba hiditra ny tranon'ireo mpianany ny Mpamonjy tamin'io alina io. Niara-nipetraka nihinana tamin'izy ireo Izy. Nandray mofo Izy, nitsodrano izany, namaky izany, ary nanome izany azy ireo. Nahiratra ny mason'ireo, ka nahalala Azy. Dia nanjavona tsy hitan'izy ireo Izy.

Noraketin'i Lioka ho antsika ireo zavatra tsapan'ireo mpianatra voatahy ireo: "Dia niresaka hoe izy: Tsy nangorakoraka va ny fontsika, raha niresaka tamintsika teny an-dalana Izy ka namoaka ny hevitra ny Soratra Masina tamintsika?"

Nihazakazaka niverina tany Jerosalema avy eo ireo mpianatra anankiroa hilaza amin'ireo Apôstôly iraisa ambin'ny folo ny zava-nitranga tamin'izy ireo. Teo am-pizaran'izy ireo ny zavatra niainany dia niseho indray ny Mpamonjy.

Nitsangana teo afovoan'izy ireo Izy ka "nanao taminy hoe: Fiadanana ho anareo." Naveriny nojerena indray ireo faminaniana mikasika ny asa nanirahana Azy mba hanonitra ny fahotan'ny zanaky ny Rainy rehetra sy hanapaka ny famatoran'ny fahafatesana.

"Ary hoy Izy taminy: Izany no voasoratra, fa Kristy hiaritra ka hitsangana amin'ny maty amin'ny andro fahatelo;

"ary mba hotorina amin'ny anarany ny fibe-bahana sy ny famelan-keloka amin'ny firenena rehetra, manomboka eto Jerosalema.

"Ary ianareo no vavolombelon'izany."

Tahaka ireo mpianany malalany, ny zanaky ny Ray any An-danitra tsirairay izay nisafidy ny hiditra ny vavahadin'ny batista dia nanao fanekempihavanana ny ho vavolombelon'ny Mpamonjy sy hikorakora ireo sahirana mandritra ny fiainantsika eto an-tany. Nolzain'i Almà mpaminany ao amin'ny Bokin'i Môrmôna mazava tsara amintsika io fanoloran-tena io an-jato taonany maro tao amin'ny Ranon'i Môrmôna:

“As ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places ... , even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, ... that ye may have eternal life.”

As you are faithful to these promises, you will find that the Lord keeps His promise to be one with you in your service, making your burdens light. You will come to know the Savior, and in time you will come to be like Him and “be perfected in him.” By helping others for the Savior, you will find that you are drawing nearer to Him.

Many of you have loved ones who are wandering off the path to eternal life. You wonder what more you can do to bring them back. You can depend on the Lord to draw closer to them as you serve Him in faith.

You may remember the Lord’s promise to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon when they were away from their families on His errands: “My friends Sidney and Joseph, your families are well; they are in mine hands, and I will do with them as seemeth me good; for in me there is all power.”

As you bind up the wounds of those in need, the Lord’s power will sustain you. His arms will be outstretched with yours to succor and bless the children of our Heavenly Father.

Every covenant servant of Jesus Christ will receive His direction from the Spirit as they bless and serve others for Him. Then they will feel the Savior’s love and find joy in being drawn closer to Him.

I am a witness of the Resurrection of the Lord as surely as if I had been there with the two disciples in the house on Emmaus road. I know that He lives.

“Satria maniry ianareo ny ho tonga ao amin’ny valan’ Andriamanitra sy hantsoina hoe vahoakany ary te hifampitondra ny enta-mavesa-try ny tsirairay mba hanamaivana izany;

“Eny, te hiara-malahelo amin’izay malahelo; eny, ary hampionona ireo izay mila fampiononana sy hijoro ho vavolombelon’ Andriamanitra amin’ny fotoana rehetra sy amin’ny zava-drehetra ary amin’ny toerana rehetra ... na dia hatramin’ny fahafatesana aza, mba hahatonga anareo ho voavotr’ Andriamanitra ... ka hahazoanareo ny fiainana mandrakizay.”

Rehefa mitoetra ho mahatoky amin’ireo fampanantenana ireo ianao, dia ho hitanao fa mitana ny fampanantenana nomeny ny Tompo mba ho llay hanohana anao amin’ny asa fanompoanao, ka hanamaivana ny enta-mavesatrao. Hahafantatra ny Mpamonjy ianao, ary rehefa mandeha ny fotoana dia ho tahaka Azy ianao ary “hatao tanteraka ao Aminy.” Rehefa manampy ny hafa ho an’ny Mpamonjy ianao dia ho hitanao fa manakaiky kokoa Azy ianao.

Maro aminareo no manana olona akaiky ny fo izay mirenireny lavitry ny lalana manka-ny amin’ny fiainana mandrakizay. Manontany tena ianareo hoe inona no mbola azonareo atao mba hitondrana azy ireo hiverina indray. Afaka miankina amin’ny Tompo ianareo fa hanakaiky azy ireo Izy rehefa manompo Azy amim-pinoana ianareo.

Mety tadidinareo ny fampanantenan’ny Tompo tamin’i Joseph Smith sy Sidney Rigdon rehefa lavitra ireo fianakaviany izy ireo teo am-panompoana Azy: “Ry Sidney sy Joseph; salama tsara ny ankohonanareo; eo an-tanako izy ireo ary hataoko aminy izay heveriko ho tsara; fa ato Amiko ny hery rehetra.”

Rehefa mamehy ny ferin’ireo sahirana ianareo, dia hanohana anareo ny herin’ny Tompo. Hiaraka haninjitra ny sandriny amin’ny ananereo Izy hanampiana sy hitahiana ny zanaky ny Rain-tsika any An-danitra.

Handray ny fitarihany avokoa ireo mpanompon’i Jesoa Kristy nanao fanekempihavanana rehefa mitahy sy manompo ny hafa ho Azy izy ireo. Hahatsapa ny fitiavan’ny Mpamonjy izy ireo avy eo ary hahita fifaliana amin’ny fanakaikezan’ny Azy kokoa.

Vavolombelon’ny fitsanganan’ny Tompo tamin’ny maty aho izay azo antoka toy ireny hoe teo aho niaraka tamin’ireo mpianatra roa tao amin’ily trano teo amin’ny lalan’i Emaosy. Fanta-

This is His true Church—the Church of Jesus Christ. We will, on the Day of Judgment, stand before the Savior, face to face. It will be a time of great joy for those, in this life, who have drawn close to Him in His service and can eagerly anticipate to hear His words: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

I testify as a witness of the risen Savior and our Redeemer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

tro fa velona Izy.

Ity ny Fiangonany marina—ny Fiangonan’i Jesoa Kristy. Hijoro eo anoloan’ny Mpamonjy isika amin’ny Andro fitsarana, hifanatri-tava Aminy. Ho fotoan’ny fifaliana lehibe izany ho an’ireo izay nanakaiky Azy tamin’ity fiainana ity tamin’ny fanompoana Azy ary afaka miandrandra fatratra ny haheno ireto teny ireto: “Tsara izany, ry mpanompo tsara sady mahatoky.”

Mijoro ho vavolombelona aho amin’ny maha vavolombelon’ilay Mpamonjy sy Mpanavotra antsika nitsangana tamin’ny maty ahy, amin’ny anaran’i Jesoa Kristy, amena.