



Visiting Teaching Message:

Blessing Our Lives and Homes with Sacred Music

“Blessing Our Lives and Homes with Sacred Music,” Ensign, Jul 2001, 69

The First Presidency has identified the value of sacred music. “Hymns,” they wrote, “invite the Spirit of the Lord.” On a personal level, “hymns can lift our spirits, give us courage, and move us to righteous action. They can fill our souls with heavenly thoughts and bring us a spirit of peace.” When taught and sung at home, they “can bring families a spirit of beauty and peace and can inspire love and unity among family members” (**“First Presidency Preface,” Hymns, ix–x**).

A Source of Personal Strength

Sacred music opens our hearts to the influence of the Holy Ghost, and it is one of the means by which our Father in Heaven blesses and strengthens us. A sister who had struggled with serious health problems for many years was in constant pain. A few years ago, she underwent some prolonged and painful medical tests. Afterward, she was asked how she was able to withstand the tests. “I sang in my head every Primary song I could remember,” she replied. “The pain did not go away, but I was given strength to endure.”

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles observed that worthy music can also help us withstand the temptation to think unworthy thoughts: “What do you do ... when the stage of your mind is commandeered by the imps of unclean thinking? ... Use [a favorite] hymn as the place for your thoughts to go. ... As the music begins and as the words form in your thoughts, the unworthy ones will slip shamefully away” (**“Inspiring Music—Worthy Thoughts,” Ensign, Jan. 1974, 28**).

Sacred Music in the Home

Sacred music has tremendous power to help us learn and live gospel principles. A sister was asked to talk to some youth in a seminary class about Church music. Her first question to the youth was, “What were some of the lessons you were taught in Primary?” There was no response. Then she asked the students if they could remember any Primary songs. Many hands were raised, and the youth shared countless song titles. The sister wrote gospel principles on the chalkboard, and Primary songs and hymns were listed under each principle. Those young people quickly understood that music teaches principles of the gospel, and songs and hymns—and the messages they teach—are remembered for years.

A home in which sacred music is used to teach gospel principles is a home open to the influence of the Holy Ghost. That is one reason the First Presidency has counseled parents: “Teach your children to love the hymns. Sing them on the Sabbath, in home evening, during scripture study, at prayer time. Sing as you work, as you play, and as you travel together. Sing hymns as lullabies to build faith and testimony in your young ones” (**Hymns, x**).

As we fill our lives and our homes with the songs of Zion, we will “serve the Lord with gladness,” and we will “come before his presence with singing” (**Ps. 100:2**).

