



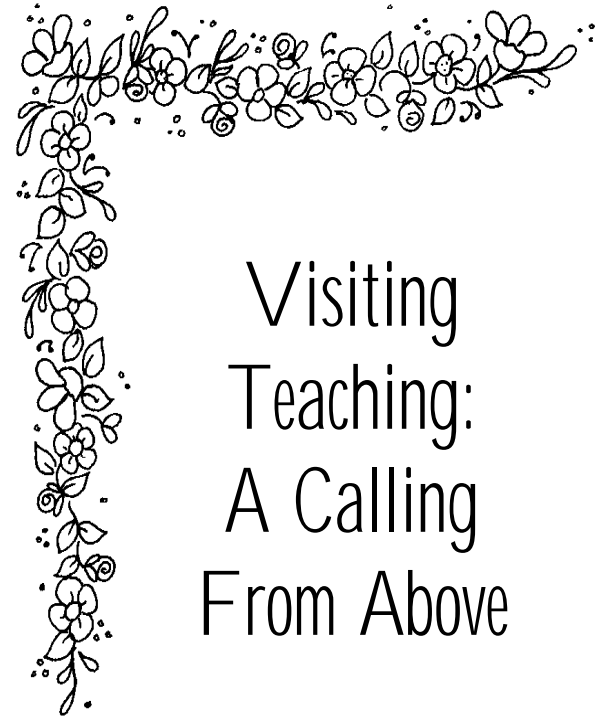
"The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them' (D&C 20:53). This is the mandate of the Lord. I hope that home teachers and visiting teachers will experience two things: first, the challenge of the responsibility that is in their great calling, and second, the sweetness of results from their work, particularly with those among us who are less active. I hope that these teachers will get on their knees and pray for direction, and then go to work to bring these wandering prodigals back into the fold of the Church. If home and visiting teachers respond to this challenge, I honestly believe that they will taste the sweet and wonderful feeling which comes of being an instrument in the hands of the Lord in leading someone back into activity in His church and kingdom" (Pres. Gordon B. Hinckley, Mar. 1997).

"You are Relief Society missionaries. Be as Saviors on Mount Zion to your sisters. Their souls are precious in the sight of God. Don't spare any effort to bring His sheep into the fold-the Savior did not!"

-Elder Mark E. Peterson

TEACHERS

SISTERS



Visiting Teaching: A Calling From Above

SLAUGHTER BRANCH
WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 9 2003

Dear Sister:

Congratulations! You have received a very important calling as a Visiting Teacher. You have been called of God through the properly constituted authorities within your Branch. You have the opportunity to radiate a powerful influence upon the lives of those you teach.

Below are the duties and responsibilities of a Visiting Teacher:

1. Praying together before making visits.
2. Visit and make other contacts with assigned sisters. Personal visits are preferred. When sisters have special needs, visits may need to be more frequent.
3. Build caring relationships by developing friendship and trust with each sister.
4. Learn of the spiritual and temporal needs of the sister and family. Offer appropriate assistance.
5. Give spiritual instruction through a monthly message found in the Ensign. These are to be used as guides and adapted to the needs of each sister.
6. Visiting Teachers have an especially important responsibility to minister to new and less active members.
7. Before each visit, review instructions from leaders, review their message and discuss how to care for each sister.
8. Report each month on the spiritual and temporal well-being of each sister.
9. If the needs are urgent or confidential, report them immediately to the Relief Society President.
10. Encourage sisters to attend Relief Society meetings and activities. Set an example of consistent attendance at Relief Society meetings and at Sacrament meetings.
11. Report names of sisters who are new in your district, those who have moved from the district, and the names of interested non-Latter-day Saint women (for missionary use).
12. Report promptly to the supervisor if you are not able to make visits in a given month.

Generally, visits to your sisters should be short, friendly, uplifting and encouraging. The discussion of personal problems, the troubles of others, topics of a sensational nature, and rumors should be avoided. You are acting in the name of the Relief Society when visiting your sisters, so your speech and dress should reflect the high ideals of the organization.

We appreciate you! We urge that you make careful preparation for your visits, seeking the inspiration of our Father in Heaven. We pray that you will strive to reach individuals and touch their lives in such a manner as to draw them closer to the gospel and increase the feeling of sisterhood. May you have a desire to magnify your calling.

Visiting Teaching Q & A

The following are some guidelines and ideas that may help you with this very important calling.

Q: What is a Visiting Teacher?

A Visiting Teacher is one of a set of companions assigned to watch over, care for, visit, and teach the RS sisters on her assigned route. She is the eyes and ears of the Relief Society President.

remember
who you
are

Q: Why does the Church have Visiting Teachers?

Because the Lord has asked us to follow the example of the Savior in "feeding His sheep". Each Visiting Teacher receives blessings as she serves her fellow sisters. Even newly baptized sisters are called as Visiting Teachers. When we are baptized we promise to "bear one another's burdens, mourn with those that mourn, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort." (See Mosiah 18:8-9)

Q: Who do I visit?

The RS President will give you a list of sisters to visit each month, along with their addresses and phone numbers. Some of these sisters may be fully active, others may not have attended any Church activities for a long time. Each sister is important, and because she is a member of the Lord's Church, she is entitled to the watch-care provided through Visiting Teaching whether she is fully active or not.

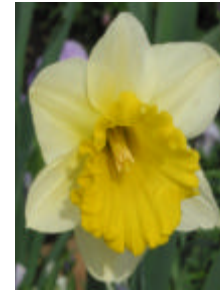
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Never
Falteth.

Q: When do I visit?

Every sister on your route should be contacted at least once each month. This contact can be through a personal visit in her home, a phone call, or a letter. At least once every three months the contact should be a personal face to face visit. If your route contains sisters that are new in the Church, less active, or who are experiencing difficulties, it is suggested that these sisters receive priority in receiving a personal visit every month.

Q: What if I call a sister on my route and she asks me not to visit her?

Miracles have happened when Visiting Teachers prayerfully seek ways to contact their sisters. Sometimes it takes many months before a heart is softened. Do not give up. Inform the Relief Society President of the sister's response. She may direct you to continue trying each month to visit, or may ask you to call or write that sister each month.



Dear Visiting Teacher:

This lovely flower has come to say
Someone missed you the other day
She waited as the month slipped by
And disappointed, she wondered why

She missed the cheer your visit brings
The won't-you-let-me-help-you things
She missed the sunny little chat
Of life and love, and this and that

Don't let this month come to its end
Without that visit to your friend
Stretch forth your heart and hands to reach
To that dear sister that you teach.

Author Unknown

"I've learned that the composition of visiting teaching is much like that of a symphony. The common melody of the gospel allows us to harmonize. However, the differences among us create an exquisite counterpoint, one all the more beautiful for its occasional unexpectedness. As each strain of the symphony is heard, a common theme emerges—one of love and compassion among sisters, strengthening each other and bringing us closer to our Heavenly Father" (Jane McBride Choate, Ensign Mar. 1995).

"In visiting teaching we reach out to each other. Hands often speak as voices can't. A warm embrace conveys volumes. A laugh together unites us. A moment of sharing refreshes our souls. We cannot always lift the burden of one who is troubled, but we can lift her so she can bear it well" (Elaine L. Jack, RS President 1990, Church News, 7 Mar. 1992, 5).