



CORNERSTONE DEDICATORY PRAYER

December 11, 1953

President Stephen L Richards

O God, the Eternal Father, thou who are the Begetter of our spirits, the Ruler of the universe, the Designer of our lives, and the Bestower of every good and perfect gift: We come before thee in the humility of prayer. Thou knowest the occasion for our assembly and our rejoicing. Thou hast witnessed the beginnings of the noble structure which thy people have resolved to erect to thy Holy Name as a house of the Lord. Thou seest that this day the cornerstone of the house is laid, symbolic of the completion of the foundations and of the high promise of consummation of the great and glorious purpose it is to subserve in thy holy work of the latter days. As we meet to tender to thee this token of our gift to come, there wells up within our hearts praise and thanksgiving for all the providential circumstances which have brought this blessed day to us.

We thank thee for the sacred history of thy restored Church, with all its sorrows and its joys, its persecutions, its hardships, its triumphs and successes. We thank thee for the lessons of life thou hast taught us, for the understanding and truth thou hast implanted in our hearts, and for the testimony of the divinity and supremacy of thee, our God, and thy Beloved Son, which has touched and convinced our very souls.

We thank thee for him whom thou didst choose to initiate thy work in this dispensation, even the Prophet Joseph Smith. We thank thee for the simplicity and firmness of his faith, for the susceptibility of his youthful, unspoiled nature to the spiritual manifestations which came from thee to him, and for the divine truths and holy principles committed to his custody for the guidance and direction and the ultimate exaltation of the whole family of God in the earth. We thank thee that this servant of thine was commissioned by thee to restore to the earth the holy gospel of thine Only Begotten Son, with all its graces, ordinances, powers and keys, and the authority to reestablish thy Church and kingdom never again to be torn down, but to go forth from generation to generation until thy kingdom shall again come to the personal presidency of thy Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. O God, we honor, praise, and venerate the name and memory of thy martyred Prophet, Joseph Smith.

We thank thee, our Father, for the good men, tried and true, who have succeeded in the presidency of thy Church. We know thou hast blessed each to fulfill the high and special purposes of his calling, and we thank thee for the progress of thy work accomplished under the direction of each president. We are assured, our Father, that thou hast accorded to each a lofty place in the councils of the Most High.

We thank thee, O Lord, for thy servant, the present President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, David O. McKay. We are grateful for the teachings and example of his life. We thank thee for his effective, untiring efforts to promote thy cause throughout the world. We thank thee for his vision and his courage to go ever forward in building and strengthening the Church at home and abroad. We are grateful that he is with us this day to direct and inspire us as we wait before thee. We thank thee that he has the satisfaction of seeing one of the many projects he has fostered going forward to completion; and all of us here assembled, his associates in the ministry of Christ, his brethren and sisters and friends, unite in earnest and heartfelt prayer that he, our beloved President, may be preserved to witness the completion of this holy temple and dedicate it unto thee.

We thank thee for the generous contributions made by thy people to the erection of this building, for the tithes of the faithful throughout the whole Church, for the subscriptions to the temple funds of the members of the Church resident in this area, for the skills and service of the designers of the plans and the artisans who have executed the work, for the outstanding supervision which has been given to the project, and for the measure of sacred, prayerful devotion which has characterized all of the activities incident to the accomplishment of this great and holy undertaking. We thank thee for the cooperation accorded by public authorities in discharge of official responsibilities concerning this structure. Bless them, our Father, for their understanding and good will.

And now, our Father, midway in the process of construction we pause for this sacred ceremony, and officially and reverently do we this day lay the cornerstone of the temple to signify our deep gratitude for that which has been accomplished and our firm resolution, with thy divine aid, to complete this noble structure and as thy servants, holding the holy priesthood, we devote, consecrate, and dedicate this cornerstone with all that it represents and typifies, and these ceremonies, unto thee, as an offering from thy grateful people. We pray thee to accept this offering and in thy providence to bring about the completion of this holy temple. As thou hast done in the past, continue to pour out thy blessings upon those who labor and contribute to the consummation of this work. Let the progress of construction go forward without undue or serious interruption. Bless all the workmen, the artisans, the artists, the architects, the draftsmen, and the supervisors with an increased measure of devotion and skill in the execution of their assigned functions. May each one be imbued with the realization of the importance of his work—that he serves in the interest of a great and holy cause.

We bring before thee, our Father, the devoted service of the officers of thy Church in the stakes and wards of southern California. We thank thee for the presidencies of stakes and the bishoprics of wards and other officials who have so efficiently organized in the solicitation of contributions among thy

people for the furtherance of this project. Continue to bless them, we pray, with the spirit of unity and faith that they and thy Saints shall achieve their generous and noble ambitions in contributing to the completion of the temple. May the participation of thy Saints in this great and beautiful undertaking bring increased devotion to the principles of the everlasting gospel, to the keeping of thy commandments and the extension and enlargement of the borders of Zion, the pure in heart.

And now, our Father, we offer a special prayer unto thee that during the course of construction and thereafter this holy temple, erected to thy Name, may constitute a great and powerful missionary force in the spread of the gospel of our Lord among the children of men. Standing on the western shore of America, the land of the free, may it be accounted as a monument to liberty—freedom to worship, freedom to speak, freedom to assemble, guaranteed by the inspired Constitution of our beloved country. And may it be an oracle in the proclamation of the divine principles which underlie these precious freedoms. Grant, O Lord, that those who come here, or who are otherwise attracted to this project, may be susceptible to the vital and transcendently beautiful principles of life given to the world in the restored gospel of our Lord and Savior. May they yield themselves without prejudice to the impressions of thy Holy Spirit, and in humility come to an understanding of man, thy son, his beginning, his probation in mortality, and his eternal destiny. And may those who minister here, representing thee and thy work, be inspired in the presentation of these divine principles with clarity of expression and the conviction of testimony. We pray, O Father, that as men may come to admire the symmetry and beauty of this structure they may more deeply and fully appreciate its meaning and significance in the living of life, and in the attainment of the highest exaltation, thou hast vouchsafed to thy children. May wisdom, thy divinely revealed wisdom and the fundamentally important things of our lives—man’s relationship to God and to his fellow man, family, health, property, and government—go forth from here and other like structures to the whole of our beloved America, to bring about the glorious destiny of this chosen land, as thou hast declared it. And may thy divine wisdom be radiated from here beyond the boundaries of America to distant lands over the western seas, that light and knowledge and liberty and eternal truth may come to thy children, so many of them enslaved in the bonds of ignorance and error and the tyranny of godless despotism. May this monument to thy Name forever stand as an ensign of peace—enlightened, enduring, righteous peace to all the world.

These high purposes for this noble structure we reverently lay before thee, our Father. If it be thy will, may they come to pass, we humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen.¹

Notes

1. “President Richards Dedicates Stone; Reveals Contents,” *Church News*, December 19, 1953, 7, 12.



OFFICIAL PROCLAMATIONS

Greetings and congratulatory proclamations from Los Angeles and California officials were issued on the occasion of the Los Angeles Temple's dedication.

Governor Goodwin J. Knight

From Sacramento, Governor Knight's wire said:

"I am proud to join in extending greetings upon the occasion of the dedication of the new Latter-day Saint Temple in Los Angeles. It was a privilege for Mrs. Knight and me to have the opportunity to inspect this magnificent edifice a short time ago.

"The temple truly reflects the profound devotion and dynamic force of your faith on the side of justice, morality, of faith and human dignity. The entire aspect is indeed one of grace, solidarity, harmony and serenity. Our visit was one of the most impressive and inspiring experiences we have ever enjoyed.

"With warmest personal regards,

"Cordially,

"Goodwin J. Knight,

"Governor of California."

Mayor Norris K. Poulson

The telegram from Mayor Poulson to President McKay said:

"Congratulations on selecting Los Angeles as the site of your magnificent Mormon Temple and for allowing the citizens of Los Angeles an opportunity to view the building before dedication. Both Mrs. Poulson and I will be ever grateful that we were among your guests. The stately building rising as it does majestically in the sky has already enhanced the city as a tourist attraction.

"Thousands more visitors will daily tour the premises, but more important still are the spiritual values and the great labor of love that will proceed from this sacred edifice.

“Best wishes to you and the Latter-day Saints of this area on this important dedicatory period.

“Norris Poulson,

“Mayor of Los Angeles.”¹

City Council

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Los Angeles City Council:

“Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has built in the city of Los Angeles a magnificent ninety-room temple which is outstanding for its architectural excellence and beauty, and

“Whereas, this temple is the largest ever constructed by the Latter-day Saints and already has established itself as a tourist attraction of the highest conception,

“Whereas upward of 700,000 persons accepted invitations to visit the stately edifice during a fifty-one-day public viewing, and

“Whereas, on Sunday, March 11, at 9:30 a.m. the temple will be dedicated with many of the General Authorities of the Church present from Church headquarters at Salt Lake City, Utah;

“Now, therefore, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Los Angeles, this 8th day of March, 1956, extends welcome to the visiting Church dignitaries and congratulates them and the Latter-day Saints of this area, who have contributed so much to the cultural and ecclesiastical betterment of this community, upon the dedication of this majestic temple.

“I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Council of the City of Los Angeles at its meeting of March 8, 1956. (Signed, Walter C. Peterson, City Clerk.)”²

County Board of Supervisors

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles:

“Whereas, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Sunday March 11, 1956 at 9:30 a.m. will dedicate the magnificent Los Angeles Temple, and

“Whereas, David O. McKay, President of the Church, with his counselors and other members of the General Authorities of the Church, will be in Los Angeles for this important event, and

“Whereas, the Mormon Temple is one of the most outstanding buildings of its kind in the entire world, and is the largest temple ever built by the Latter-day Saints, and

“Whereas, the temple was opened for a short time for public viewing, and hundreds of thousands of people were impressed by its grandeur and inspired by the muraled artistry of its rooms;

“Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles congratulates David O. McKay, President of the Church, and all other Church officials on the dedication

of the temple on Sunday, March 11, 1956, a day that will commemorate for all time an important event in the religious history of Los Angeles County.

“Adopted by order of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, State of California, this 8th day of March, 1956. (Signed, H. C. Legg, Chairman of the Board and Supervisor 1st District; Kenneth Hahn, Supervisor 2nd District; John Anson Ford, Supervisor 3rd District; Buxton W. Chase, Supervisor 4th District; Roger N. Jessup, Supervisor 5th District.)”³

Notes

1. “Gov. Knight, Mayor Poulson Send Greetings on Temple,” *Church News*, March 10, 1956, 2.
2. Doyle L. Green, “Los Angeles Temple Dedication,” *Improvement Era*, April 1956, 229–30.
3. Green, “Los Angeles Temple Dedication,” 230.