


## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Awakening to a Life of Discipleship*

Because of publication schedules, an introduction like this for the *Religious Educator* is written months in advance of the issue appearing in print. Normally, that would not be a problem, as academic life typically has a predictable rhythm. But as all are keenly aware, the year 2020 has broken the pattern. “A virus 1,000 times smaller than a grain of sand,” remarked Elder Jeffrey R. Holland in the April 2020 general conference, has brought “entire populations and global economies to their knees.”<sup>1</sup> Sadly, for those who love teaching, this has created empty classrooms. As scientists scramble for solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic, I find myself eager for 2020 to end, even though it is only July.

With that hope for a new year, we turn our attention to the contents of this issue. Readers will note a heavy emphasis on Restoration history and doctrine. This is by design. Not only does this coincide with President Nelson’s declaring 2020 a “bicentennial year” to commemorate “the very foundations of the restored gospel,”<sup>2</sup> it prepares for seminary and *Come, Follow Me* study of Doctrine and Covenants and Church history in 2021. Articles explore how to use recent historical sources in the classroom, Church history episodes like the translation of the Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith’s presidential campaign, and doctrinal themes such as God’s interactions with and love for his children. In a timely message, Elder Bruce C. Hafen headlines the issue, sharing thoughts on how to help students struggling with doubt and uncertainty, something many have confronted over the past several months.

We continue to pray for safety for our readers and, through this collection, enhanced appreciation for the beauty of the Restoration.



Scott C. Esplin  
Editor in Chief

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “A Perfect Brightness of Hope,” *Ensign*, May 2020, 82.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Closing Remarks,” *Ensign*, November 2019, 122.