

# Editor's Note

In the spring of 2000, Religious Education at Brigham Young University issued the first volume of the *Religious Educator* (volume 1, number 1). Soon thereafter, Robert J. Millet, dean of Religious Education, asked me to become the editor-in-chief of this new venture. More than a year elapsed before we released volume 2, number 1 in late 2001.

The delay between volumes 1 and 2 happened while I was putting together a team to produce a new format, establishing procedures to ensure scholarly work of the highest quality, and identifying the unique service we intended to provide readers. Because outstanding periodicals dealing with scripture, doctrine, and Church history were then (and now) being published at Brigham Young University, such as *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* and *BYU Studies*, we needed to identify a special niche for the *Religious Educator*. We decided our focus should be on serving the interests and needs of those who teach the gospel on a regular basis to high school and college students and adults. In each issue, we planned to select articles and essays that would be helpful and appealing to this diverse audience (early-morning seminary teachers; full-time CES teachers; professors at BYU campuses in Hawaii, Idaho, and Provo; and Gospel Doctrine, priesthood, and Relief Society teachers).

Hours turned into days, days into weeks, and weeks into months following my first conversation with Dean Millet. In the meantime, I was busy thinking, dreaming, and working on surrounding myself with people who could help. I asked my colleague, mentor, and friend, Ted D. Stoddard (of the BYU Marriott School), to help me produce several key documents, including a submission guide. Next, I asked several people from across the country to become members of an editorial advisory board—men and women who could help us keep our perspective and ensure that the *Religious Educator* would not become merely another publication by BYU faculty for BYU faculty. Finally, I recruited Stephen A. Hales (Stephen Hales Creative, Inc.) to provide suggestions for a new format.

Since those early days when we survived on a Spartan budget and when the work week typically involved sixty to seventy hours, we have been delighted with the response to this venture. We are grateful beyond measure that many people have supported our efforts to find a specific niche and to submit essays and articles that are thoughtful, well crafted, and informative.

When we released volume 2, number 1, the *Religious Educator* featured Elder D. Todd Christofferson's article, "The Faith of a Prophet: Brigham Young's Life and Service." Since then, we have been blessed by wonderful contributions from Church leaders and many others beyond the BYU campus. Of course, we continue to publish articles and essays by BYU faculty—those men and women who spend their time researching, writing, and teaching about issues important to our audience.

As we begin our eighth year with this issue (volume 8, number 1), we are still fine-tuning our efforts. We appreciate our readers' continued support and look forward to publishing helpful, useful, and spiritually uplifting articles and essays. We no longer face the necessity of working long overtime hours to meet deadlines, but the spirit of service and sacrifice we started with continues to prevail throughout all our efforts.

Please join us again on an adventure that will continue to provide surprises and insights as you turn the pages of this issue and become part of the dialogue between competent scholars and inspiring teachers who are, above everything else, committed disciples of Jesus Christ.

Richard Neitzel Holzapfel  
Editor-in-Chief