

## [Despite temple closures, blessings are readily available during COVID-19 pandemic, Elder Bednar says . . .](#)

This post comes to us from the April 26, **2020 Church News**. *Editor's note: This is part four in a series of counsel from members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles during the COVID-19 outbreak. [The entire article by Sarah Jane Weaver](#) is essential for us as it pertains to blessings of temples even though the temples are closed world-wide. I will share a few quotes and strongly recommend that this feature article be read in its entirety.*

“As recorded in the Old Testament, Jehovah promised the children of Israel that as they carried the Ark of the Covenant — the most sacred of their religious symbols — they would cross the River Jordan on dry land. Most noteworthy in this episode, said [Elder David A. Bednar](#), is that the “water did not part until their feet were wet.”

The moment recorded in [Joshua 3](#) is one of those “great lessons of the past” that can be instructive to Latter-day Saints today facing the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic that has claimed thousands of lives, crippled the world economy and isolated world populations, said the member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

In response to the coronavirus crisis, Church leaders made many adaptations in order to be part of the solution to the pandemic — including [closing temples across the globe](#).

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles answers a question during a press conference in the Rome Temple Visitors' Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Monday, Jan. 14, 2019. “The temple “is a point of intersection between heaven and earth,” Elder Bednar said, adding that a person’s experiences in the temple help him or her see far beyond mortality.

“Still, during this time when temple work is not being performed, blessings are readily “available to Latter-day Saints, he said. Like the children of Israel who carried the Ark of the Covenant into the River Jordan knowing the waters would part, members must press forward with fortitude, courage and the expectation that miracles will follow.”

“If we will exercise the faith to press forward, then in the Lord’s way, and according to His timing, the water will part,” .Elder Bednar, chairman of the Church’s Temple and Family History Executive Council, spoke to the Church News via a video-conference call weeks after the First Presidency issued a [March 25 statement suspending temple work worldwide](#) in response to the coronavirus crisis. During this season of closed temples, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can focus on “what we learn and the Spirit that we feel in the temple,” said Elder Bednar.

Quoting [Elder Neal A. Maxwell](#) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder Bednar said as Latter-day Saints “pass through our holy temples,” they must also “let the holy temples pass through them.”

“In a season when we have temporarily suspended temple operations, it is a choice opportunity to invite the covenants and ordinances to pass through us,” the apostle said. “The lessons learned in our previous temple experiences are not recalled only when we are in the temple.” Those teachings “are in our minds, hopefully in our hearts. And we can have access to those learnings and those memories anytime.”

The article's five subheads are powerful and well laid out for further study.

- Honor Covenants
- Observe Patterns
- Petition the Lord
- Hold a temple recommend
- Press forward

## Closing Comments

[President Russell M. Nelson](#) has emphasized since becoming the 17th president of the Church, that temples — not the buildings, but the ordinances and covenants — are the focus of all that Latter-day Saints do in coming unto Christ, said Elder Bednar. President Nelson announced at the conclusion of general conference in April that the [Church will build eight new temples in nations across the globe](#). With these announcements, the Church has 168 dedicated temples with 15 under construction and another 42 announced.

Recalling the invitation for all Latter-day Saints to hold an active temple recommend, pray and remember their temple covenants, Elder Bednar promised Church members that if they press forward with faith, the “waters will part” and temple work for both the living and the dead will resume.

“More temples will be announced in future conferences,” he said. “The caravan moves on.”



Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles smiles during a press conference in the Rome Temple Visitors' Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Monday, Jan. 14, 2019. Credit: Ravell Coll, Deseret News



Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his wife, Sister Susan Bednar, walk from the Rome Italy Temple to the Rome Temple Visitors' Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Monday, Jan. 14, 2019. Behind them at right is President President Marcello De Vito, president of the Rome City Council. Credit: Ravell Coll, Deseret News