The Plano Texas Stake Preparedness Challenge

For April—“Be Clean”

“Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”(Isaiah 1:18)

Years ago at this time of year, our grandmothers would throw open their windows, roll up their sleeves, and go through a ritual known as “spring cleaning.” The purpose of this activity was to rid their homes of the dirt and musty smells acquired during those long winter months where doors and windows had remained closed and the heating methods of that time had deposited a dirty film over walls and other household surfaces. Some of us still feel the urge to go through this same ritual, eliminating from our homes not only dirt, but items that clutter out lives. Even better than the feeling of having our homes cleaned and purged of the unnecessary, is having our souls cleaned and sanctified. The process of sincere repentance and making necessary changes to our lives can be the most cleansing of any experience we can have here in mortality. The Atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ makes it possible to experience this feeling of being clean and pure. It is He who, suffered for our sins and made it possible for us to cleanse ourselves through repentance. It is He who satisfies the demands of justice and makes it possible for our “sins [of] scarlet” to become “as white as snow.” At this time of year where we commemorate our Saviors greatest gift to us, may we experience a renewed commitment to, “Be Clean.”

Spiritual Goals:

**First Spiritual Goal: Make twice daily personal prayer a habit. Set aside time for twice daily family prayer as well.** By making prayer a habit, we are opening the way to receive personal revelation. Alma explains that the sons of Mosiah were powerful teachers not only because they had studied the word of God but also because, “. . . they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God.” (Alma 17:3)

**Second Spiritual Goal: Hold weekly Family Home Evenings with your family**. Hold weekly Family Home Evenings (preferably on a Monday night). A wealth of information on making successful Family Home Evenings can be found on the Church’s website: [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org) Click on “Serve and Teach,” then “Lessons and Teaching,” then, “Family Home Evening.” Consider having at least one of the FHE lessons in April on the theme for the month, “Be Clean.”

**Third Spiritual Goal: Have daily personal and family scripture study.**

The suggested scripture reading for the month of April is Jacob 5 through Mosiah 13. If this does not fit in with your family, go at your own pace or select other scriptures to fit your family needs.

**Fourth Spiritual Goal: Do family history work and attend the temple regularly**. Fulfill the Plano Stake Goals of spending at least **one hour of indexing** each month, **one hour of family history** each month and of taking **one family name to the temple** each year. Contact your ward or branch family history specialist to find out more. Register yourself at: <https://familysearch.org/>. Make plans to attend the temple regularly. If you do not currently possess a temple recommend, see your Bishop or Branch President to make plans to obtain one.

 Financial Objectives:

**First Financial Objective: Collect, copy, and store your important documents.** Keep originals in a fire proof safe or box. Keep a copy in your 72 hour kit or Grab and Go Binder. Consider scanning in and downloading your documents onto a flash drive or two. You may need proof of who you are and that you own the property you claim to own. Don’t forget to have a copy of your family’s medical records. Keep all records up to date. Find a list of suggested documents to copy on the Stake website: [www.preparednessplano.org](http://www.preparednessplano.org) in the “Resources “section for April under the “Preparedness Challenge” tab.

**Second Financial Objective: Continue working on your financial goals. Continue making and living by your budget. Work toward reducing and getting out of debt. Continue to build your savings.** See [www.providentliving.org](http://www.providentliving.org) for more information and help on financial planning. The Stake website [www.preparednessplano.org](http://www.preparednessplano.org) also has a debt reduction worksheet and a budget worksheet that you can download to continue making budgets on a monthly basis (or any other time segment that works for you). These can both be found under the “Resources” section for February under the Preparedness Challenge tab.

Emergency Preparedness Tasks:

**First Preparedness Task: Learn about Emergency Sanitation and Hygiene. Acquire what supplies you can to take care of your family’s needs should water and sewer systems fail.** The handout entitled “Be Clean—Sanitation in an Emergency,” in the “Resources” section of this month’s “Preparedness Challenge” on the Stake Preparedness website [www.preparednessplano.org](http://www.preparednessplano.org) can help you.

**Second Preparedness Task**: **Complete one third of your goal for the year for your family’s home storage.**  If you are able, have at least a one month supply of foods your family will eat stored by the end of this month. If this is not financially possible, store what you are able. Don’t forget those non-food items especially those which relate to hygiene and sanitation (toilet paper, bath soap, shampoo, laundry supplies, cleaning supplies, and etc.).

**Third Preparedness Task: Store tuna fish, soups and beans.** The Family Home Storage Center Products Order Form lists the shelf life of its beans as 30 years. This would assume they were stored properly—oxygen free at 74° F (or less). Beans are a great source of protein. They are an incomplete protein but when combined with another incomplete protein such as rice, or with a complete protein such as meat, they become complete. They can be part of your three-month or longer term storage program. Older beans, especially those not stored properly will take longer to become tender. Soak them overnight in water with some baking soda added. Tuna can be purchased in bulk from warehouses or grocery stores. Watch for sales. If your family does not like tuna, consider getting a supply of canned chicken to store. Watch for sales on your family’s favorite soups. Read the nutrition labels before you buy. Determine how often your family eats tuna fish, soup and beans and buy extra—up to a three month supply.

**It’s General Conference time. Because this comes twice a year it is a good time to check your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide monitors and update food and clothing in your 72 Hr. Kits.**