



We're All Sisters!

These young women served their "secret grandmothers" anonymously. But there was no hiding the fact that they learned a lot about Christlike love.





MORE ALIKE THAN DIFFERENT

“As you feel of that great sisterhood, what we thought divides us falls away.

For instance, younger and older sisters share their feelings with the expectation of being understood and accepted. You are more alike as daughters of God than you are different.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Daughters in the Covenant,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 127.

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines

Pastel-colored tissue paper cluttered tabletops as young women from a ward in Utah, USA, working with their leaders, cut circle after circle, then threaded the circles together to form flowers, and then attached them to head bands. As they fashioned flower after paper flower, laughter and conversation filled the air—as well as anticipation. The flowers were to be worn at a dinner where, after months of anonymous service, the young women would finally meet their “secret grandmothers.”

From February to September, the young women had worked both alone and in groups—delivering treats, washing windows, plastering paper hearts all over doors—anything they could think of to brighten the day of the senior sisters in their ward.

And now it was finally time for the grandmothers to find out which young women had been serving them.

“So, You’re the One!”

The evening for the dinner soon arrived. It didn’t take long before young women and “secret grandmothers,” all of them with paper flowers in their hair, were laughing and joking, saying, “So, you’re the one!” and “Thank you so much!”

Once everyone was a little better acquainted, and after sharing a delicious meal, the real fun of the evening began.

The “grandmothers” had responded to questionnaires. As their answers were read aloud, the young women had to guess who was being introduced.

Answers revealed information such as favorite childhood activities, best advice received from parents, life-changing moments, family rules and chores when they were teens, favorite foods, embarrassing experiences, awkward dates, nicknames, their mother’s recipes, family heirlooms and traditions, favorite teachers, and much more.

“Women I Admire”

There were some tender moments. One young woman, Charlotte R., 18, who lost her mother when she was eight, found out that two of the senior sisters had been through the same experience.

“That strengthened me a lot,” Charlotte said. “Here are women I admire, who do so much and help so many, and I never knew that they lost their mothers, too.”

Sister Shields, for example, was 16 when her mother died. Charlotte said, “When she said her mother’s faith stayed strong and that she heard her mother’s testimony many times, that really touched me, because that’s how my mother was.”

Sister Shields showed two prized possessions to the young women—a baptismal dress her mother sewed, and a

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coat her mother made for her just before she passed away.

Serenity M., 15, said that “seeing what Sister Shields’s mother did for her made me think about what my mother has given to me.” It also made her glad that she had made something nice for Sister Shields: “a hot chocolate mug with a smiley face inside, so that when she’s done drinking cocoa she has an extra reason to smile.”

“We’re All Sisters”

Another young woman, Michaela M., 15, said she had often seen Sister Heyward at church before the months of service began. “I never actually knew her personally,” Michaela said, “but doing service for her made me feel closer to her, even though until tonight she didn’t know who was doing it.”

At the dinner, however, Michaela gained additional perspective. “Tonight, when the ‘grandmothers’ answered questions about growing up, going on dates, what they learned in seminary, and all of that, I thought, those are the same things I’m going through. I got the feeling that we’re all sisters, even though we’re different ages.”

Emma F., 13, agreed. “Sometimes it’s fun to be with people who are a little older because you get to see how much alike we are.”



WE NEED EACH OTHER

“We must stop concentrating on our differences and look for what we have in common; then we can begin to realize our greatest potential and achieve the greatest good in this world. Sister Marjorie P.

Hinckley once said, ‘Oh, how we need each other.

Those of us who are old need you who are young. And, hopefully, you who are young need some of us who are old. It is a sociological fact that women need women. We need deep and satisfying and loyal friendships with each other’ [*Glimpses into the Life and Heart of Marjorie Pay Hinckley*, ed. Virginia H. Pearce (1999), 254–55]. Sister Hinckley was right; oh, how we need each other!”

Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women general president, “Sisterhood: Oh, How We Need Each Other,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 121.

“I’m Excited”

Emily M., 15, said that an added benefit of the service and the dinner was that it made her feel eager to attend Relief Society. “If they’re all nice like these ladies,” she said, “then I’m excited.”

“It brought us together as sisters in Zion,” said Chloe F., 17. “It wasn’t scary or intimidating to be with these ladies; it was easy and natural because we all had things in common. It strengthened my testimony of how we truly are sisters, and I was impressed with their faith and how it has guided them.” It was, she said, “perfect preparation for when I go into Relief Society this fall.”

And Amanda L., 17, said, “The day after the dinner, Sister Coke left me some flowers and a note that said she was happy to get to know me. I’ve made a friend and it won’t taper off. I’m going to keep visiting her every once in a while to see how she’s doing, to let her know we still care.”

That is, after all, the sort of thing that sisters do. **NE**

