

Brother Leonard A. Lovalvo

Personal Data: *Birth: 8/9/1940; Baptism: 3/3/1957*
Ordinations: *Teacher; Elder: 4/23/1972; Evangelist: 7/17/1983; Apostle: 4/22/2007*
Leadership: *Great Lakes AMBA President; Great Lakes Region 2nd Counselor, GLR 1st Counselor; GLR President, DMOC Chairman, Quorum of 70 Vice President*
Mission Work: *Muncey and Six Nations Missions in Ontario, Canada; Bogota, Colombia; Sikkim and West Bengal, India*

Leonard A. Lovalvo was born to Brother Anthony R. Lovalvo and Sister Anne M. Lovalvo in Detroit, Michigan. His father and mother were members of The Church of Jesus Christ and the family attended Detroit Br #1 until 1954 and then transferred to Detroit Br #4. His father was ordained an evangelist and his mother ordained a deaconess in the Church and both served in several capacities including nearly 20 years of missionary work at the Six Nations Mission in Ontario, Canada.

Brother Leonard considers the positive influences he experienced as a boy to be very important, because they provided the basis for his belief in God, His son Jesus Christ and allegiance to The Church of Jesus Christ. Most significantly, he and his younger sister Rosanne, were reared by God-fearing parents who gave them the understanding and knowledge that formed this basic foundation. He learned from them to have faith in God for His guidance, protection, and help in time of need. Having been raised in the environment of The Church of Jesus Christ fostered many endearing relationships with the brothers, sisters, and families of the church. In addition, Brother Leonard remembers his Sunday School teacher, Sister Mary DiChiera, who provided instruction, devotion, and tenderheartedness as she taught him and the other children. These remarkable people set examples of deep faith in God and commitment to the Church and its efforts to spread the message of the Restored Gospel, and even as a young boy engendered a desire to participate in the missionary efforts of the Church. He recalls the excitement he felt as he attended meetings with his father and Brother Joseph Lovalvo at various missions in Sarnia, Six Nations, Mount Bridges and Muncey in Ontario, Canada and in Port Huron, Michigan.

Consequently, from the days of his youth, he began to develop a desire within his heart to become a member of the Church. At 15 years of age, God gave him a dream in which he saw himself being baptized. Not long afterward, during a Church service at Detroit Br. #4 on Sunday, March 3, 1957, Bro. Leonard asked for his baptism. That afternoon, Brother Joseph Lovalvo baptized him, and later in a service at Detroit Br. #3, Brother Rocco Biscotti bestowed the gift of the Holy Ghost upon Brother Leonard. During his prayer, Brother Biscotti spoke in the gift of tongues, and Bro. Anthony Corrado gave the interpretation, which was; "I will be with you always." That message has always brought comfort and assurance to Brother Leonard.

After high school, he attended Eastern Michigan University where he received a BS degree in Mathematics Education in 1962 and subsequently an MA degree in Guidance and Counseling in 1963. He began his teaching career in September, 1962 in the South Redford School District, Redford, Michigan teaching mathematics at Pierce Junior High and Thurston High School and ended his career as a high school counselor. He retired after 40 years as an educator appreciative and honored to have had this most fulfilling and gratifying experience to serve young people and their families.

Bro. Leonard married Sister Loretta Bologna on August 8, 1964. Three children were born to them -- Brother Duane Lovalvo, Brother David Lovalvo, and Sister Jennifer Staley who along with their spouses have been a great blessing not only to them but also to God and His Church. He considers Sister Loretta to be his best friend and has always been a tremendous support to him in all of his Church assignments and appointments. Together they have a deep faith in God and are determined to serve Him and His Church all the days of their lives.

The night before he was to be ordained an Elder, Bro. Leonard was reading the scripture searching for inspiration, confidence, and encouragement. He opened the Bible and the pages literally separated at 2 Peter 1. His eyes were guided to read verse 10, which states "...give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall..." This scripture immediately gave him the understanding and consolation he needed confirming his calling, and also the admonition to be diligent to prove that calling. Since then and over the years, he states that that scripture has been a mirror by which he has lived his life.

He has always had a love for the Native Americans who we understand to be descendents of Joseph, the son of Jacob as written in the scriptures. In his early thirties (1970) and for approximately two years he along with Brother Peter Scolaro accompanied Brother Joe Milantoni on a biweekly basis and serviced the Muncey Mission. They had many wonderful experiences and developed friendships that have lasted through the years. He was ordained an Elder in 1972, and later on was assigned as the Presiding Officer of the Six Nations Mission and served in that capacity at different times for 5 years. At the present time, he continues to take the opportunity to visit the missions along with the brothers and sisters of the Great Lakes Region.

From 1972-1976, Brother Leonard was the Great Lakes Area MBA President, and in those years with the help of many brothers and sisters, developed programs whose primary focus was on the youth of the Church. On a monthly basis, they held activity planning meetings where 30-40 young people regularly attended and participated in organizing their projects of youth meetings, area camps, volunteer activities, recreational events, visits to the missions, and fundraisers. Those years were extraordinary years of development for him and for the young people. They were filled with excitement, energy, and enthusiasm for the Lord and His Church.

Brother Leonard has learned that life can bring many challenges and lessons sometime difficult to accept and learn. On January 31, 1996 he was injured in a severe car accident that required pelvic and shoulder surgeries and several months of rehabilitation. That event made a dramatic and lasting impact on his mind and heart. Probably for the first time, the brevity of life became a realization of fact to him. Consequently, he became determined to be more focused and diligent in the work of the Church. He had a heightened desire to have the Lord use him as an instrument in His hand and to lead him by the gift and power of His Spirit to bring the message of the Restored Gospel to all men everywhere. Shortly thereafter while attending a Quorum of 70 Evangelist Conference, he was asked to serve as Chairman of a newly formed committee, the Domestic Missionary Operating Committee and did so for 5 years.

In 2006, Brother Leonard made his first foreign missionary trips visiting the mission in Bogota, Colombia in May and in September the missions in West Bengal and Sikkim, India. Worshiping with brothers, sisters, friends, and children in these distant places in the world was a most beautiful and gratifying experience for him. Preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and witnessing men and women repenting of their sins and asking for baptism was truly indescribable and marvelous.

He was called into the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and ordained at the World Conference Center by Apostle Joseph Calabrese on April 22, 2007. His desire is to be a servant to the congregations of the Church, to all of mankind, and to be used as an instrument in the hand of God to do His will and to help build His kingdom here on earth.