

By Hilary Watkins Lemon

Based on a true story

# Can't I Be **BAPTIZED** Too?

*“Children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old” (D&C 68:27).*

**N**uno and Miriam, will you follow the example of Jesus Christ and be baptized next Saturday?” Sister Silva asked.

Paulo couldn't believe his ears. The sister missionaries had just invited his 10-year-old brother and sister to be baptized!

“Yes! Yes!” the twins said happily.

Miriam couldn't stop smiling. Nuno gave Sister Lopes a high-five. Grandmother beamed from her big red armchair in the corner.

For a few weeks the sister

missionaries had been teaching Paulo and his siblings at Grandmother's house on the green, breezy island of São Miguel—1,000 miles (1,600 km) away from mainland Portugal. Paulo loved to open the top half of Grandmother's front door and feel the sea breeze as he watched Sister Lopes and Sister Silva walk up the street to teach him about the gospel.

The sister missionaries said today would be a special lesson. Now Paulo knew why. Nuno and Miriam were going to be baptized, just like Jesus taught! Paulo also wanted to follow the Savior's example.

“Sisters, can I be baptized next Saturday too?” he asked

eagerly, holding his illustrated Book of Mormon closer to him.

Sister Silva smiled but shook her head. “I'm sorry, Paulo. The Lord has told us that we all need to be baptized but only after we turn eight years old. Because you are only six, you aren't accountable for your choices yet.”

“But, sisters,” Paulo objected, “I have been praying and reading the Book of Mormon with my family, like you taught me. I go to Primary every week with Grandmother and Uncle Mário. I know the Church is true! Can't I be baptized with Nuno and Miriam?”

“You have done such a good job living the commandments and learning about the gospel,” Sister Lopes said. “But you still need to wait two years before you can be baptized.”

Paulo's throat started to burn, and hot tears filled his eyes. He jumped up and ran to his room in the attic, where he slept with his siblings.





After crying into his pillow for a few minutes, Paulo heard someone climbing the attic stairs. Uncle Mário sat down on Paulo's bed.

"What happened, Paulo?" Uncle Mário asked.

"Sister Silva and Sister Lopes said I can't get baptized, but Nuno and Miriam can," Paulo said. "I want to be a member of the Church! I love singing the hymns in sacrament meeting and learning about the scriptures in Primary. I don't want to be left behind."

"Paulo, you can still be a part of the Church, even though you are not old enough to be baptized," Uncle Mário said gently.

"How?" Paulo sniffed into his pillow.

"Well, you know that the Primary is preparing a sacrament meeting program," Uncle Mário said. "Your Primary teacher told me she is looking for volunteers to bear their testimonies in the program. That is one way you can participate in church," Uncle Mário explained.

"Really?" Paulo sat up and faced his uncle. He thought for a minute. "Maybe I could bear my testimony at Nuno and Miriam's baptism too!"

"That's a great idea!" Uncle Mário said. "Even though you are too young to be baptized, you can still have a testimony."

Paulo hopped off his bed and hurried down the stairs.

"Where are you going, Paulo?" Uncle Mário called.

"I'm going to practice bearing my testimony to the missionaries!" Paulo called back happily. "I'm going to share it while I wait to be baptized!" ■



"Patience means active waiting and enduring. It means staying with something and doing all that we can—working, hoping, and exercising faith."

**President Dieter F. Uchtdorf,**  
Second Counselor in the First  
Presidency, "Continue in Patience,"  
*Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 57.