

When Murilo was baptized at age 16, his whole family was against it. When he received a mission call, his parents threw away his church clothes. He stayed home and eventually helped bring his family into the Church, but he still felt unworthy for not having served a mission.

CODY BELL, PHOTOGRAPHER

Murilo Vicente Leite Ribeiro

Goiânia, Brazil

It was difficult for me to be a young man and to not be on a mission. I felt inferior to my friends who had already left on missions, and I felt alone at church. Some people thought I did not go because I was unworthy. But I did my best to remain firm in the faith.

Years later I met with Elder Jairo Mazzagardi of the Seventy when he came to reorganize our stake. He asked me about my mission.

"I did not serve a mission," I said, starting to cry.

"Brother Murilo," he said, "do not look back; look forward. Whoever looks back walks backwards, and whoever looks forward walks forward. You are clean."

It felt like a six-ton backpack was lifted off my back.

He told me to return with my wife and called me to serve as stake president.

Read more of Murilo's story in the *Ensign* online at lds.org/go/portraitsE717.



