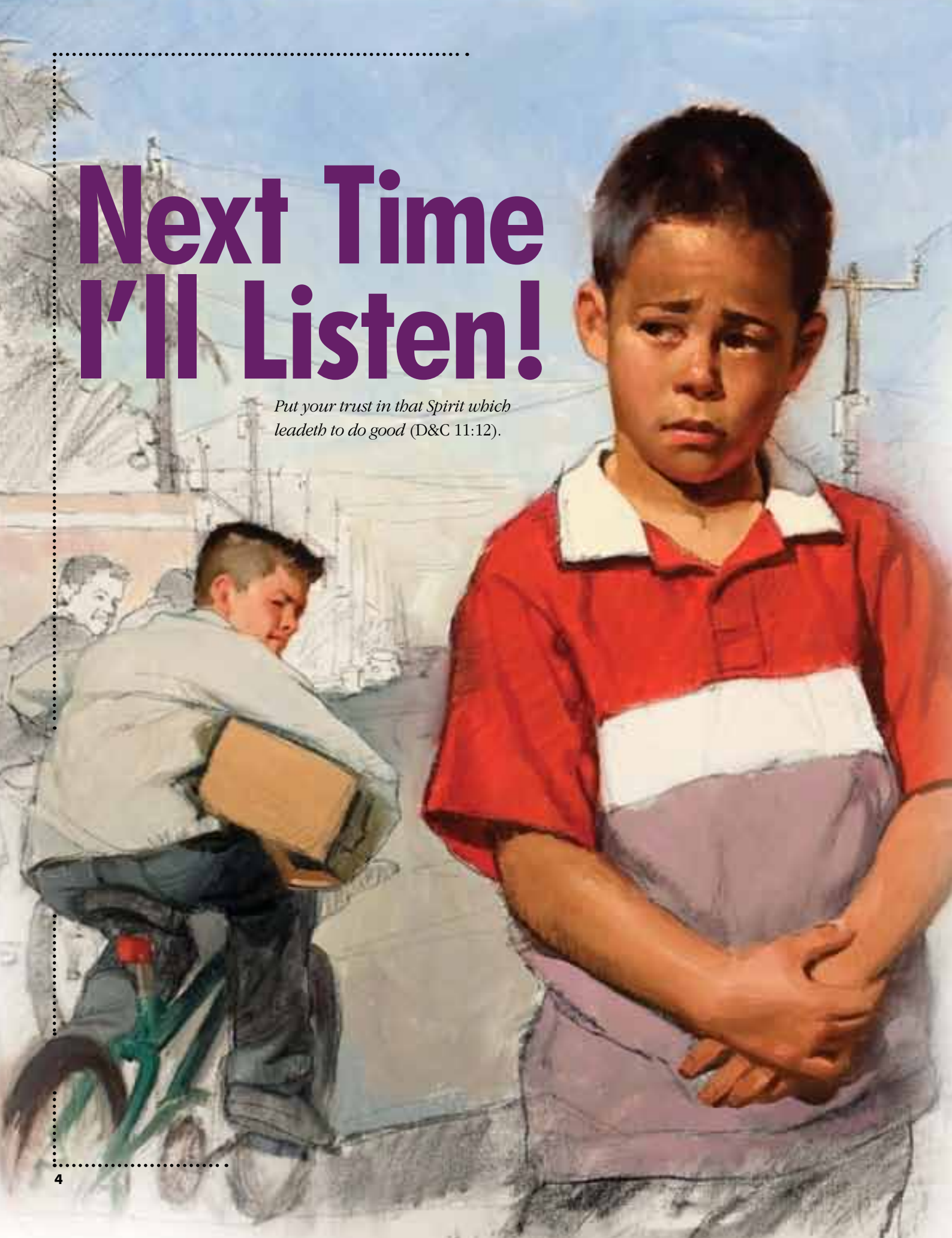


Next Time I'll Listen!

*Put your trust in that Spirit which
leadeth to do good (D&C 11:12).*



BY SUNNY MCCLELLAN MORTON

(Based on a true story)

Almost finished,” Manuel whispered. He glanced down at the box under his arm. Nearly all the candy was sold. Now his box held an envelope filled with money.

As the sun beat down on Manuel’s head, he thought of home and his mother and grandmother waiting there. He smiled to think of how happy they were lately. Manuel felt the same happiness, and he knew why—they were all going to be baptized next Sunday.

“Get out of the way!” someone suddenly yelled from behind Manuel. Four boys on bikes raced by as Manuel jumped into the gutter.

Manuel had seen those boys earlier, riding on the opposite sidewalk. A thought had crossed his mind: stay away from those boys. But as they pedaled away, Manuel had relaxed and forgotten about them. Now the feeling returned even stronger. Still, he wanted to finish selling the candy, so he kept going.

Manuel had just sold the last of the candy when the boys returned. One of them grabbed his shoulder as he rode by. The box slipped from under Manuel’s arm, and another boy whizzed past and grabbed it. “No!” Manuel cried. He watched sadly as they carried off his box of hard-earned money.

That evening, Manuel heard a knock at his bedroom door. “Manuel! Please come out!” His mother sounded worried.

“I told you, Mamá, I don’t feel well.”

“But the missionaries are here to see us.”

Manuel got to his feet, took a deep breath, and squared his shoulders.

“*Hola*, Manuel,” Sister Santos said as Manuel joined his family in the living room.

Usually Manuel listened carefully to the missionaries. But tonight he was thinking about the boys and the box of money. He wished he had run away the first

time he had seen them. But how was he supposed to know what to do? Would he ever feel safe walking down the street again? He frowned and started listening to the lesson.

“The Holy Ghost is a messenger from Heavenly Father,” Sister Santos said. “He can guide and inspire our thoughts. He can help us make good choices and warn us of danger.”

Manuel looked up. “What do you mean?”

“Well, have you ever had a strong thought come into your head?” Sister Santos asked. “Maybe it was a prompting to do something. Maybe it just seemed like a great idea.”

Manuel’s eyes widened as he remembered the strong feelings he’d had earlier about getting away from the boys on bikes. “I think it happened today,” he said slowly.

The missionaries looked at him with interest. So did Manuel’s mother and grandmother. He told them about the boys and the stolen box.

“Oh, Manuel, I’m so sorry,” his mother whispered. “That’s why you’ve been so upset this evening. Later I want you to tell me more about those boys. Maybe we can get your money back.”

“I’m sorry too,” Sister Santos said. “But I think you are right. That was probably the Holy Ghost you felt inside.” She paused. “You will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost after your baptism when you are confirmed. That means you will be able to have and feel those messages a lot more often. As you stay worthy, the Holy Ghost can be your constant companion. How do you feel about that?”

A relieved smile crossed Manuel’s face. “Much better!” he said. “I was starting to think I would always be afraid to walk outside. But if the Holy Ghost will warn me again, like He did today, I’ll be fine.” He grinned at his mother. “Because the next time the Holy Ghost speaks to me, I’m going to listen!” ●



“The Spirit of the Lord can be our guide and will bless us with direction, instruction, and spiritual protection during our mortal journey.”¹

Elder David A. Bednar
of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles