



The Mushroom Lesson

By Emily Werner

(Based on a true story)

"By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things" (Moroni 10:5).

Annie was so excited. Mom was going to pick wild mushrooms with her friend, Miss Maria. And she said Annie could come too! So could three of her siblings who were old enough.

"OK," Mom said before they left. "I'm letting you come because I know you can be really good listeners. That's super important while we look for mushrooms. Some wild mushrooms are delicious. But some mushrooms are poisonous. They will make you sick. So can you all promise to do exactly what Miss Maria says?"

Annie and the others promised to be good listeners.

"Yes!" Annie and her siblings shouted. Annie, Autumn, Gideon, and Adelaide grabbed their baskets and walked to the forest to meet Miss Maria.

Miss Maria was a mushroom expert. She had been taught how to find safe mushrooms to eat in the Bavarian Forest in Germany.

"Hey, kids!" Miss Maria said. "Who's ready to find some mushrooms?"

Annie and her siblings cheered. "Me! Me!"

"Great!" Miss Maria said. "Now remember, you can only touch or pick the mushrooms that I say are safe."

Annie and the others promised again to be good listeners. Then they followed Miss Maria into the forest.

The sun was bright as they walked across the





moss-covered ground. There were mushrooms all over! There were orange, white, red, and brown mushrooms. Some were big. Some were little.

Annie's favorites were the red mushrooms with white polka dots. They reminded her of fairy tales. But she listened when Miss Maria told her not to touch them. Those mushrooms were beautiful but very poisonous!

Miss Maria guided them carefully. Annie and her siblings were good listeners, just like they promised.

They also got to help in other ways. Autumn took pictures of the mushrooms. When Miss Maria found mushrooms that were safe to eat, Gideon carefully cut the stems. Then Annie and Adelaide carried them in the baskets.

Finally it was time to go home. Miss Maria reminded them to wash their hands with soap and water as soon as they got back.

"Thank you for showing us the forest and helping us with the mushrooms," Annie said.

Miss Maria smiled. "Thank *you* for being good listeners!"

For dinner that night, Dad cooked potatoes, sausage, and eggs with an

extra-special ingredient. Mushrooms!

"Yum," Annie said as she took another bite. "These taste so good!"

"It's a good thing Miss Maria knew which mushrooms were safe to eat," Mom said.

"And it's a good thing we listened to what Miss Maria said!" said Autumn.

Annie thought for a moment. "Is that kind of like how we need to listen to the Holy Ghost?" Annie was getting ready to be baptized and confirmed. She was learning about what it meant to have the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Mom nodded. "Yes! The Holy Ghost can help us know what's right and good. Kind of like how Miss Maria helped us know which mushrooms were good to eat."

"So it's important to listen carefully to the Holy Ghost," said Dad.

"Exactly," Mom said.

"I'm glad the Holy Ghost can help keep us safe," Annie said. And with that, she smiled and took another big bite of delicious mushrooms. ●

The author lives in Bavaria, Germany.

