

An Activity Day Invitation

BY MARIANNE DAHL JOHNSON

Based on a true story

"Gather together in one the children of God" (John 11:52).

Remember that activity day is after school today," Mom said at breakfast.

Clarissa sighed. "I know."

"What's wrong?" Mom asked. "I thought you loved activity day."

"It's all right," Clarissa said.

"Remember how excited you were to go when you turned eight?" Mom asked. "And you like Sister Cobian."

"She's great," Clarissa said. "It's just hard because Ashley and I are the only two who go. I like Ashley, and she is always nice to me. But she is almost 12, and I just turned 9. I don't really know what to say to her. It's not that fun."

Mom put her arm around Clarissa. "I'm sorry it's hard sometimes. We have a small Primary without a lot of girls, but I'm sure you'll have a good time this afternoon."

After school Clarissa walked the one block to the church where they held activity day. Sister Cobian and Ashley greeted her happily. After the opening prayer Sister Cobian said, "I asked the Primary president about

girls who are on the Primary rolls but don't come to activity day or Primary. I have this list of the girls and their phone numbers. I thought that if we called them before each activity day, they might come join us."

"That's a great idea!" Clarissa exclaimed. "It would be fun to have more girls here."

Sister Cobian smiled. "I'm glad you like the idea, because I want to ask you to call the girls before our next activity day."

"Me?" Clarissa gulped. She wasn't sure about that. Sister Cobian handed her the list. She knew all the girls from school, and some of them came to church occasionally. But it might be scary to call and invite them.

"Will you do it?" Sister Cobian asked.

Clarissa looked at the list again. Some of these girls were her age. Activity day would be a lot more fun if they came too. "Sure," she said.

Before the next activity day, Clarissa called the girls on the list. She left messages or talked to all of them. It wasn't hard at all.

The next day at school, Olivia, one of the girls Clarissa had called, asked her if they could walk to activity day together. Clarissa was thrilled! After school Clarissa and Olivia walked to the church together.



When they entered the Primary room, Sister Cobian gave them a big smile.

Before the next activity day, Clarissa called the girls again. Olivia was excited to come again. Chelsea said she would come too. The next afternoon Clarissa felt so happy as she walked to the meetinghouse with Olivia and Chelsea.

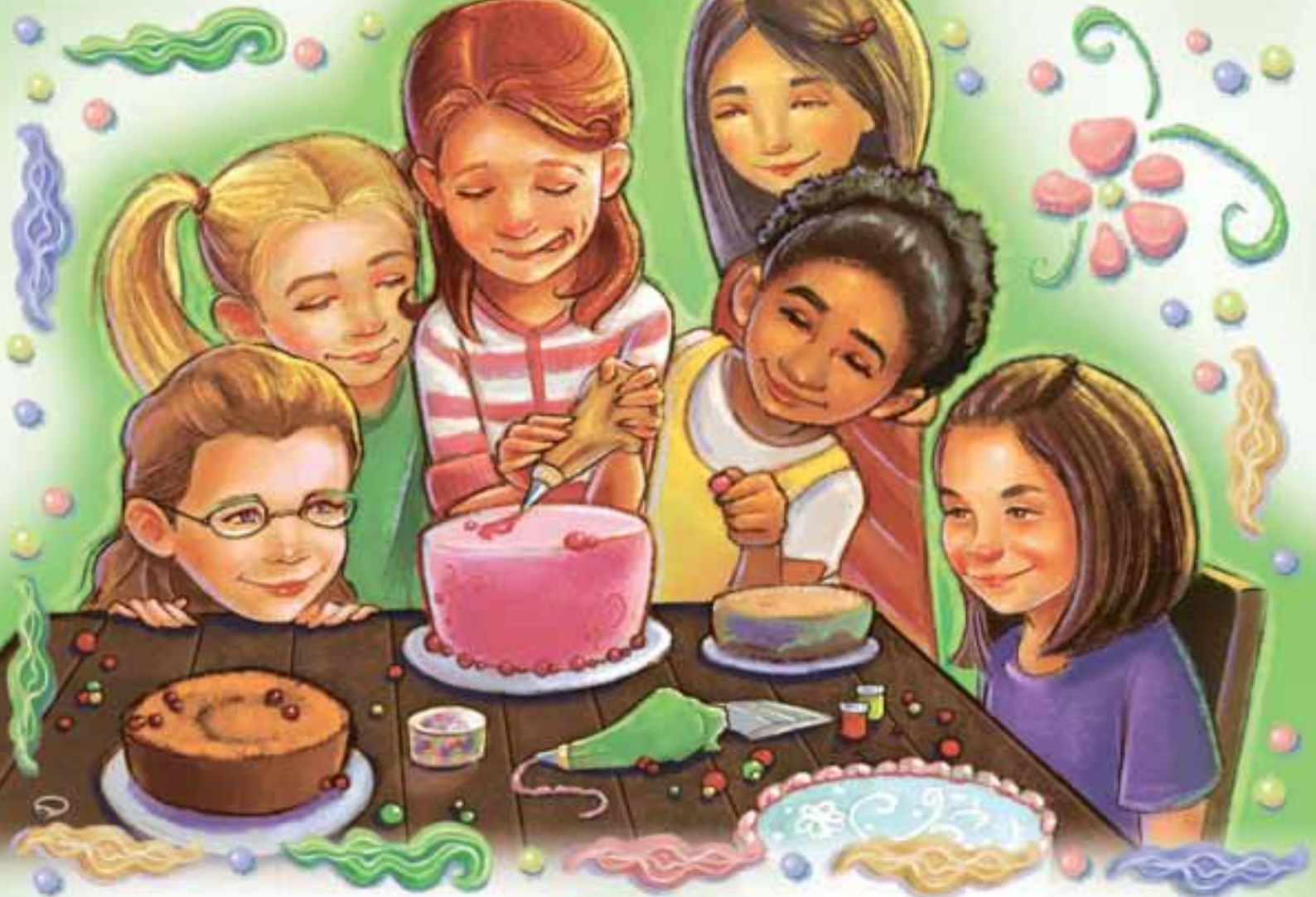
That night Clarissa told her mother how fun activity day was with more girls. "I just wish Madison could come," Clarissa said. "She's my best friend."

"Well, why can't she?" Mom asked.

"Mom, she's not on the list. She's not a member of the Church."

"That doesn't matter," Mom said. "You'll be doing missionary work when you invite her. You're already being a missionary by encouraging Olivia and Chelsea."

Clarissa thought about that. When she called the activity-day girls again, she called Madison too. Madison asked her mom if she could go, and her mom said yes. Clarissa couldn't believe how easy it was. She wondered why she hadn't invited Madison months ago!



At activity day that week, Sister Cobian made an exciting announcement. At their next activity day, they were going to have a special guest teach them how to decorate cakes. Clarissa and Madison smiled at each other. That sounded fun! As they left that afternoon, Madison said, "Thanks for inviting me. I want to come next time to decorate cakes."

The very next day, Clarissa started talking to all of her friends at school about the cake-decorating activity. Madison helped. Many of their friends said they wanted to come.

"There might be 15 girls at our next activity day," Clarissa told her mother.

"Fifteen!" Mom exclaimed. "Where did you find that many girls?"

"I've been inviting all the girls in my class," Clarissa said.

"That's wonderful!" Mom said. "But you better let Sister Cobian know so she will be prepared for that many."

Clarissa called Sister Cobian to tell her how many girls to expect. On activity day the Primary room was crowded with girls chattering and laughing as they decorated cakes. Sister Cobian winked at Clarissa and gave her a big smile.

Afterward Clarissa helped Sister Cobian clean up. Her friend Emily came to say good-bye. "Thanks," she said shyly to Sister Cobian. "Is it OK if I invite my older sister and my two cousins next time?"

Sister Cobian smiled. "That would be great, Emily," she said.

Clarissa could hardly wait for the next activity day! ●



"[Invite] our friends and neighbors into the ongoing flow of family and Church activities. As we invite our friends to join us for these activities, they will also feel the Spirit."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Creating a Gospel-Sharing Home," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 86.