

# Marta's DAILY



# SERVICE

*This mom and daughter work hard to live the gospel together. And Marta is able to live it by serving her mom in unique ways.*

**By Sam Lofgran**  
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**M**arta is an 11-year-old from Portugal, and like many girls her age, she likes to spend time with her friends, eat food, and play with her dolls. She also enjoys spending time with her mom. But living with her mom means that Marta lives a bit differently than other kids.

Marta's mom, Sonia, was born with a motor deficiency that makes it difficult for her to walk. She isn't completely paralyzed, but she does need a walker to get around. She isn't able to dress herself, bathe herself, or get herself into bed. This makes it hard for her to live alone. Marta has been able to serve Sonia for the last few years by helping her with things that she can't do by herself.

"I keep my spaces clean so my mom can get around easier," says Marta. "I also take breaks from playing so I have time to check on my mom and see if she needs help. If I'm playing and she calls, I'll go quickly because it could be something urgent."

But Sonia tries to let Marta live as normally as she can. If Sonia doesn't need any help, she makes sure that Marta gets time to play with her friends.







## LIVING THEIR FAITH

Marta has the opportunity to live the gospel each day by serving her mom. She takes on a lot of responsibilities that other kids don't usually have. For instance, she wakes up early to help her mom get ready for work before school. Without Marta's help, Sonia wouldn't be able to get around or go to work every day.

Marta and Sonia also attend church together. Sonia was baptized when she was eight years old, so Marta has grown up in the Church. Sonia teaches Marta about the importance of the gospel every day. One way she does this is by having many pictures of Jesus Christ in their home.

"I know that God lives and that Jesus Christ is real," Sonia says. "And I want everyone who comes to my house to know that faith is very important to me. It's also important for me to teach this to Marta so that she grows up with this knowledge of Jesus Christ."

Marta has taken what her mom has taught her and continues to learn more about the gospel on her own. One way she likes to learn is by reading the scriptures, which helps her establish a stronger relationship with Heavenly Father and the Savior. "As I read the scriptures, I feel that Christ is at my side," she says.

## FINDING COMFORT

While it can be difficult to have so much responsibility, going to church each week helps Marta find the comfort she needs to keep helping her mom. "When they say the prayers at the start and end of sacrament meeting, it's so peaceful" she says. "When I'm there, sometimes I feel like Heavenly Father is telling me that I'm a good person and that I have to continue to be a good person to help my mom."





Whenever she feels this way, she is reminded how grateful she is for her mom. She feels that Heavenly Father has sent angels to support her. “I think that He strengthens me to wake up and be happy and proud of the mom I have,” Marta says.

One of the lessons that Sonia and Marta have learned together is that life isn’t easy or perfect—for anyone. Sonia says, “None of my difficulties make me sad. I know that God gave me this flesh and blood and bones this way because I am special, and God told me I could do it. I do my best. I can do more, but today I’m feeling OK with myself. I am proud of what I do, what I have, and what I will do tomorrow.”

Marta also realizes that things will work out all right, even though life can be difficult at times as she takes care of her mom. She sees that everyone has different challenges. “No one’s life is perfect,” she says. But even with her own personal challenges, Marta still finds good things in every situation—the relationship she has with her mom is one example. “My mom has a physical limitation, but mentally and emotionally she is very intelligent. We’re really good friends.”

## LOOKING FORWARD

So what’s in the future for Marta and Sonia? Marta says, “I want to stay close to my mom, and of course I want to get married, have kids, and have a family. But in the future, if I can, I want to buy a house for both my family and my mom because I wouldn’t want to be far from her for even a day!”

Sonia feels optimistic about the future as well and will always be grateful for Marta’s companionship and love. “It’s amazing having a beautiful daughter. It’s very nice to have Marta in my life. She is a gift from God. He prepared Marta to stay here with me.” ■